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May saysay pa ba ang Edsa I?

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GMA warns of debt crisis like Argentina in 2 years if…

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.
and Doris C. Dumlao

JUST days after getting hit with a two-notch international credit downgrade, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday raised anew the specter of an Argentina-type debt crisis for the Philippines in two years' time if the govern-

GMA WARNS/ A22

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Free dentures put smile on traffic enforcement

By Irene C. Perez

KUMUKUTI-KUTITAP PA ANG CLOSE UP SMILE?

WHO SAID traffic enforcers had no teeth?

The government yesterday gave free dentures to 40 Metropolitan Manila Development Authority

FREE/ A22

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

Saturday, February 19, 2005 ★★ 82 pages 10 sections Vol. 20 No. 73 P18

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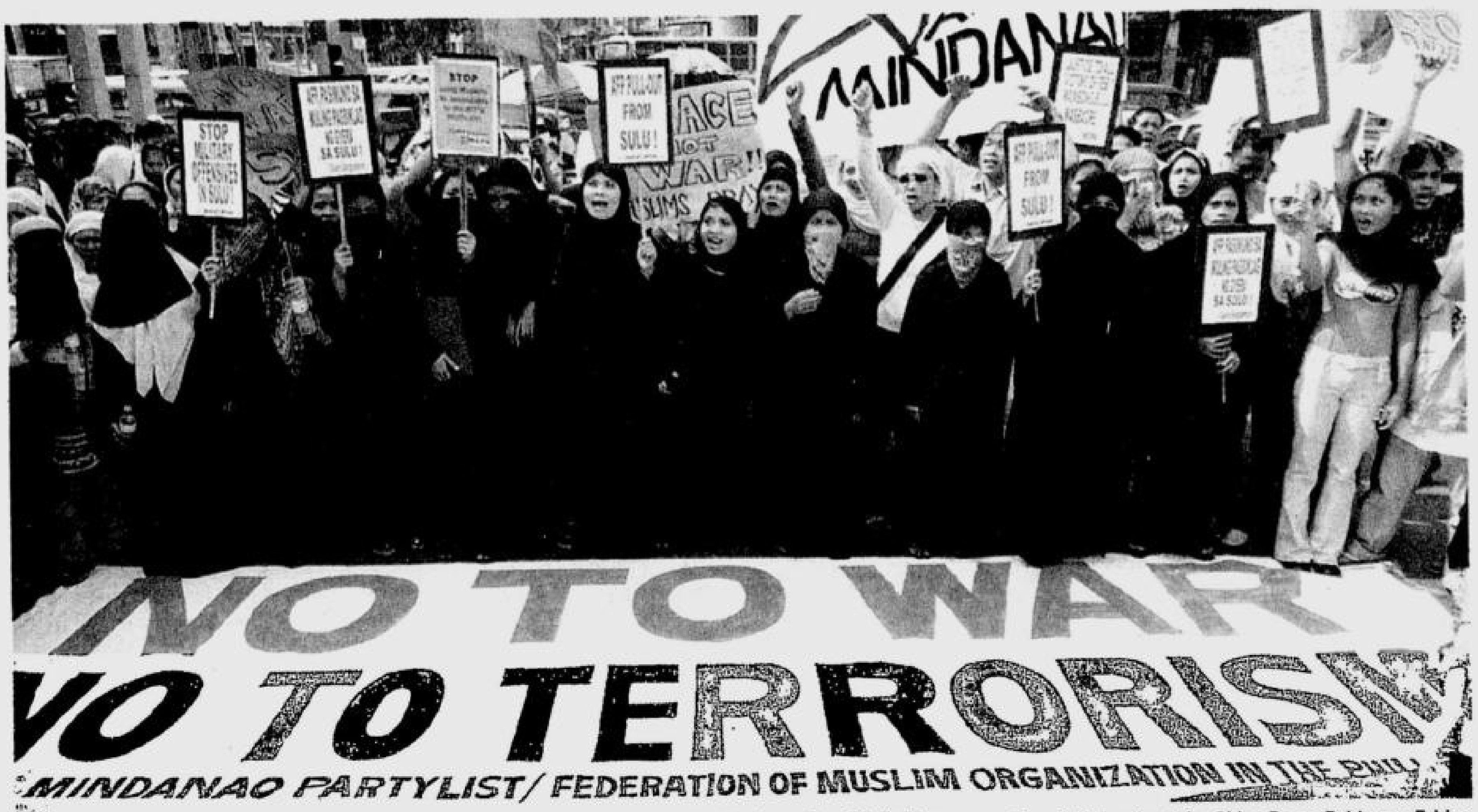
3 blast suspects known

Witness steps forward; another Makati bombing victim dies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NO TO TERRORISM
MINDANAO PARTYLIST/ FEDERATION OF MUSLIM ORGANIZATION IN THE PHIL

TERRORISTS are always Muslims, grumble various Muslim groups led by Anak-Mindanao Rep. Mujiv Hataman as they hold a rally at the Chino Roces Bridge on Friday to protest the antiterrorism bill as it would likely be used against Muslims. They cite the recent arrests of Muslims at an Islamic Center on Taft Avenue allegedly engaged in terrorist activities.

ERIK ARAZAS

By Christian Esguerra
and Nancy C. Carvajal

POLICE yesterday claimed they were closing in on three people suspected to be behind the Makati bus explosion, as the death toll from the Valentine's Day blast in the city rose to four. *(See related story on Page A21.)*

"We're very close. We're just waiting for the results of the operation," Director Avelino Razon Jr., National Capital Region Police Office chief, told reporters.

He said a "conscience-stricken" witness who surfaced Thursday to tell what he knew about the bombing had given information on the location of the suspects and police were now conducting surveillance operations.

Razon did not explain why—if the suspects' location had been pinpointed—no arrests had been made.

The operation was being carried out by officers from the Intelligence Group and Task Force Sanglahi, the Philippine National Police's main antiterrorism unit, he said.

Southern Police District director Chief Supt. Wilfredo Garcia Jr. described the witness as a Christian, in his 30s and married.

Razon said the suspects were identified based on the information given by the unnamed witness, who was identified in television reports by his supposed alias of "Francisco."

"The witness has identified at least three suspects," Razon said.

Razon refused to elaborate on the witness' statement, saying to do so would jeopardize operations.

But he said the man was no bogus witness.

"He knows something and he knows what he's talking about," Razon said. "We've checked his background. No less than the chief PNP and IG officers interviewed him."

Part of the witness' story was corroborated by the bus conductor's account of the bomb attack, he said.

Razon said investigators were still trying to piece together other accounts of surviving passengers to arrive at a general picture of the incident.

Like Razon, Garcia told another group of reporters: "We are already pursuing three suspects."

Garcia declined to answer questions on the witness' credibility, saying some of the information the witness provided had been verified.

"It would not be good to say that we believed him one hundred percent," the Southern Police District chief said.

Garcia also said he was not discounting the possibility that the suspect's statement could just be a ploy to delay and mislead the investigators.

"He could also be just after the half a million reward," he added.

He said the witness was now in the custody

3 BLAST/ A21

Social cost of fighting staggering, says solon

By Cynthia D. Balana
and Blanche S. Rivera

SULU Rep. Hussin Amin yesterday lamented the "staggering" social cost of the war in his province, pointing out that the number of evacuees now approached 30,000 after 10 days of fighting between government troops and followers of jailed Moro leader Nur Misuari.

Amin said he was grieving for his constituents, particularly the children who had had to bear the brunt of the fighting. He also questioned the presence of 40 US military personnel who were reportedly seen manning the Philippine military's war rooms in Sulu.

The lawmaker said that in any war, there were no victors, only victims.

"This is why I have the view that a military solution is not the answer to the conflict. We tried it before; it failed. It will fail again in this case," he said.

Amin also said the employment of the "attack and destroy" strategy would never succeed and only alienate the people of Sulu.

He appealed to President Macapagal-Arroyo to declare a ceasefire in the province to enable the warring sides to talk peace.

According to Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla, co-convenor of the Bishops-Ulama Conference of the Philippines, the government will face more and longer conflicts in Mindanao if it continues to refuse to release Misuari.

The conflicts will continue as long as the Bangsamoro people do not find

SOCIAL/ A21

Antiterror bill: 'Taxes today, liberties tomorrow'

"TODAY, more taxes; tomorrow, less liberties. What next?"

Sen. Joker Arroyo yesterday raised this question in the course of urging Malacañang to desist from pushing for the passage of an antiterror bill that includes the wiretapping of suspects' homes.

"Malacañang should leave the people's civil liberties alone. These are the only things left with them," the maverick member of the administration coalition said at a press conference.

Arroyo said wiretapping was "patently unconstitutional." He also pointed out that the Supreme Court had "touched on the potential unconstitutionality" of the proposed national identification system that President Macapagal-Arroyo had urged local government units to adopt. *(See story on Page A21.)*

"Why bring these up again?" the senator said. "Is the executive saying that it cannot solve the terrorist and dissident problems without infringing on the Bill of Rights?"

But despite the fact that Ms Arroyo had certified the antiterror measure as urgent, the Senate is not about to rush its approval.

Senate President Franklin Drilon yesterday acknowledged that the antiterrorism bill filed by Sen. Panfilo Lacson was one of the measures that senators agreed last August to give priority to.

However, he said, the Senate's legislative calendar did not include debating on a proposed antiterrorism law, at

ANTITERROR/ A6

Poverty worsened since 1997, says ADB report

By Doris C. Dumlao

POVERTY in the Philippines has worsened since the 1997 Asian currency turmoil, with population ballooning due to economic mismanagement and the country's vulnerability to external shocks.

In a report yesterday, the Asian Development Bank also said that while there had been episodes of sustained gross domestic product growth, this had not translated into increased average incomes for either the population, as a whole, or for the bottom 30 percent.

The report, titled "Poverty in the Philippines: Income, Assets and Access," said economic growth had not been high enough to keep up with population growth, keeping gross national product stagnant at around $1,000 for the past 20 years.

"This is partly a result of mismanagement of the economy, and partly a result of external shocks, to which the Philippines is particularly vulnerable," the report said.

The report said that it had been widely recognized that the impact of the 1997 crisis was not as serious in the Philippines as it was in neighboring countries, and that the Philippines was able to recover relatively quickly.

"Nevertheless, it did have an impact on poverty, undoing some of the gains made in the early to mid-1990s in terms of income poverty incidence," the report said.

It added that the crisis unfortunately came at the same time as the devastating El Niño drought.

The report said economic growth was a necessary pre-condition for poverty reduction, but that growth must be pro-poor.

"Weak macroeconomic management thwarts pro-poor growth, and the fiscal deficit and the national government debt are the Achilles heel of the Philippine economy," it said.

"With the chronic fiscal deficit prob-

POVERTY/ A21

Bush names former RP envoy spy chief

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush on Thursday named John Negroponte, a former US ambassador to the United Nations and currently the administration's top representative in Iraq, to be America's first national intelligence director.

Negroponte was the American envoy to the Philippines from 1993 to 1996.

Announcing the move, Bush said that Negroponte understands global intelligence needs because he's had a long career in the foreign service. Bush said Negroponte will be his primary briefer on intelligence matters and will make decisions on the budget.

"John will make sure that those whose duty it is to defend America have the information we need to make the right decisions," the president said. "We're going to stop the terrorists before they strike."

Negroponte said he plans "reform of the intelligence community in ways designed to best meet the intelligence needs of the 21st century."

He called the new job "the most challenging assignment I have undertaken in more than 40 years of government

BUSH/ A6

PRESIDENT BUSH names US Ambassador to Iraq John Negroponte to the newly created position of director of national intelligence overseeing the operations and the budgets of 15 US intelligence agencies during a White House press conference.

REUTERS

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Bicol region and the eastern sections of Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.
SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/02/19/05

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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Second FrontPage

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Gov't target: 1 million OFWs

RP BEAUTY IN JAKARTA
Putting her best foot forward, the Philippine bet for the Miss Asean 2005 beauty contest, Jhezarie Javier, gets a traditional foot massage while visiting an Indonesian cosmetics shop in Jakarta. AFP

By Jerome Aning

THE PHILIPPINES hopes to deploy a million overseas Filipino workers this year as traditional, as well as new and emerging markets in many parts of the world continue to open their doors to OFWs.

Department of Labor and Employment Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas yesterday said she was confident that the 933,588 documented OFWs deployed in 2004 would be surpassed this year with the opening of 14 new destinations for OFWs.

Sto. Tomas once argued that sending Filipinos overseas was not something to be ashamed of because of low wages and prevailing unemployment.

Listed in the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration's 2005 marketing plan as new OFW destinations are: Israel for caregivers, tourism and construction workers; Macau for hotel and casino workers; Singapore and China for teachers; Australia, Norway, Trinidad and Tobago, and South Africa for health care workers; the Cayman Islands for restaurant workers; the Bahamas for medical and skilled workers; the United Kingdom for social workers and physical and occupational therapists; Kazakhstan for technical and professional workers in the oil, energy and construction sectors, and Iran for skilled workers.

The employment permit system of South Korea is also a "sure source" of more jobs for Filipino workers as the POEA sees a 200-percent increase over last year's deployment figure of 900 with "smoother hiring procedures."

Taiwan's special hiring program will generate at least 1,000 jobs for production workers.

On the maritime front, deployment of seafarers to man oceangoing ships is predicted to continue to grow by at least six percent worldwide in 2005.

POEA Administrator Rosalinda Baldoz said that with the potential job loss in the Japanese market of about 55,000—a result of stricter recruitment rules for performing artists—about 65,000 overseas jobs could be generated with the new and additional opportunities in the 14 markets.

Sto. Tomas said recent developments affirmed the OFWs' productivity worldwide. Among these was the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas report which said that OFW remittances reached $8.5 billion in 2004, confirming the DOLE's projections.

The delisting of the Philippines from the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force's money laundering list also gave importance to the role of OFWs as sound remittance channels were safeguarded, she added.

To ensure that the one-million mark and other goals would be achieved, Sto. Tomas said DOLE and POEA, in coordination with the legitimate private recruitment industry, would be conducting year-round high-level marketing missions to tap and strengthen OFW markets.

She said DOLE would proceed with the 2nd International Employers Awards and the International Jobs Fair within the year.

Undersecretary for employment Danilo Cruz outlined the DOLE's tasks this year: maintain and boost strengths in the traditional markets; tap new and emerging markets; ensure the welfare and reintegration programs for the benefit of OFWs and their families, and redouble efforts against illegal recruiters.

Palace bent on salvaging VAT bill

By Carlito Pablo, Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.
and Christine O. Avendaño

AMID strong opposition from senators, moves are afoot to salvage the unpopular bill raising the value-added tax from the present 10 percent to 12 percent.

Malacañang, according to Rep. Joey Salceda (Lakas-Kampi, Albay), is calling for a meeting by the Legislative Executive Development Advisory Council to whip senators into toeing the VAT increase policy.

"President Macapagal-Arroyo can't afford to lose the war for VAT. The administration will insist on a VAT hike and play all its cards to get it. In poker, it is an 'all-in' situation," Salceda said in an interview.

Salceda said the Palace will hold the Ledac meeting on Tuesday.

Asked if Malacañang will use the occasion to make senators toe the line, Salceda said: "We will do just that."

"If we allow them (senators) to have it their way, they would just prove that Moody's was right after all," he said, referring to Moody's recent downgrading of the country's credit rating due to, among others, the slow pace of fiscal reforms.

At the House of Representatives, Reps. Raul del Mar (Lakas, Cebu City) and Teodoro Locsin Jr. (PDP-Laban, Makati) have proposed a "pass-through prohibition" clause that will bar companies from passing on the higher tax to consumers.

"They are not supposed to pass on the VAT to consumers," Locsin saying this is based on the principle that VAT is "not a cascading tax."

To give teeth to such a pass-through prohibition, Locsin said he will propose penal provisions to compel compliance.

"Maybe. They might consider that," Locsin said when asked whether such clause will soften the opposition by senators to the VAT hike.

But Malacañang itself appears to have toned down its clamor for a higher VAT and is now letting the Senate decide whether it is better to remove exemptions rather than raising VAT from 10 percent to 12 percent.

"The bottomline is that Congress will pass one measure that will help our fiscal problem. Any measure that will address fiscal situation will be welcome. What is important is the end result," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye in a briefing.

Bunye, however, refused to categorically state Malacañang's position on the VAT rate hike after the Senate ways and means committee declared Thursday that it may junk the proposed VAT hike and maintain the VAT at 10 percent but lift all exemptions enjoyed by independent power-producers, airlines, shipping companies and cooperatives.

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Ex-Citibanker appointed new national treasurer

By Michelle V. Remo and Doris C. Dumlao

CRUZ

NEWLY appointed Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima has chosen former Citibanker Omar Cruz to head the Bureau of Treasury, replacing National Treasurer Norma Lasala.

"Omar is an expert in the area of treasury and capital markets," Purisima said yesterday in a press briefing. He said he personally picked Cruz, whom he had known through his dealings with the business community.

Purisima said he was already processing the appointment papers of Cruz, and that the latter will assume the highest post at the Treasury once the processing is completed.

The appointment of Cruz goes against the will of officers and employees from the Bureau of Treasury who have been pushing for the retention of Lasala as national treasurer. Deputy Treasurer Eduardo Mendiola earlier said the officers and employees of the Treasury believed "we have finally found a good treasurer" in the person of Lasala, whom he described as someone who has initiated positive programs at the Treasury.

Mendiola said the Treasury had sent two resolutions to Malacañang, one from the employees' union and the other from the officers, asking President Macapagal-Arroyo to retain Lasala.

Mendiola said he believed domestic interest rates are on a declining trend now because the market favors the leadership of Lasala, who assumed the highest post at the Treasury in November last year after the resignation of former National Treasurer Mina Figueroa.

The replacement of Lasala is rumored to have been caused by her firm opposition to a directive from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to require third-party custodians for debt instruments, including government securities.

Under BSP Circular No. 392, securities will have to be safe-kept in banks that have secured accreditation from the BSP to act as custodians.

The Bureau of Treasury, however, is insisting that government securities need not be safe-kept by a third-party custodian because it is mandated to do the job. According to Lasala, the Treasury is not only issuer of government securities but also a custodian.

Purisima said his decision to appoint a new Treasurer had nothing to do with Lasala, but with his preference to work with someone he personally knows.

When asked how he felt about his appointment, Cruz told the INQUIRER: "I'm here to do a job. It's a good challenge."

Cruz has had 27 years of work experience in treasury, securities trading, risk management, commercial and investment banking and business economic research.

An ex-Citibanker, he is the chief finance officer of the University of Asia and the Pacific and the director and vice president of the Financial Executives Institute of the Philippines.

He is also a director and chair of ABN- AMRO Bank's audit committee and a director of Paref-Southridge Inc., a regional consultant of Citigroup Singapore and trustee and treasurer of the Philippine National Police Foundation Inc.

As a vice president of Citibank N.A., he handled securities trading, private banking, financial institutions group, compliance and risk management and treasury. *With Reuters*

Erap's shortest trip: One hour

By Armand N. Nocum

IN ONE of his shortest trips outside his detention center in Tanay, Rizal, ousted President Joseph Estrada yesterday spent just an hour for a medical check-up at the Cardinal Santos Medical Center in San Juan.

Estrada left Tanay at 6 a.m. by chopper, arrived at the hospital at 10 a.m. and was out of there by 11 a.m., also by chopper. In the past, Estrada would ask that he be allowed to visit his mother whenever he was in the area. Not this time.

His personal doctor, Lorenzo Hocson, said Estrada's condition had improved. Early this month, Estrada was rushed to the hospital for "slight pneumonia."

Hocson said Estrada had some blood work and X-rays done. "His lungs are almost clear," he said.

Hocson also advised the former leader to get plenty of rest and to go slow in smoking cigarettes.

He reiterated an earlier assurance that Estrada has no problems with his newly-replaced knees, saying he can now walk better, albeit with a cane.

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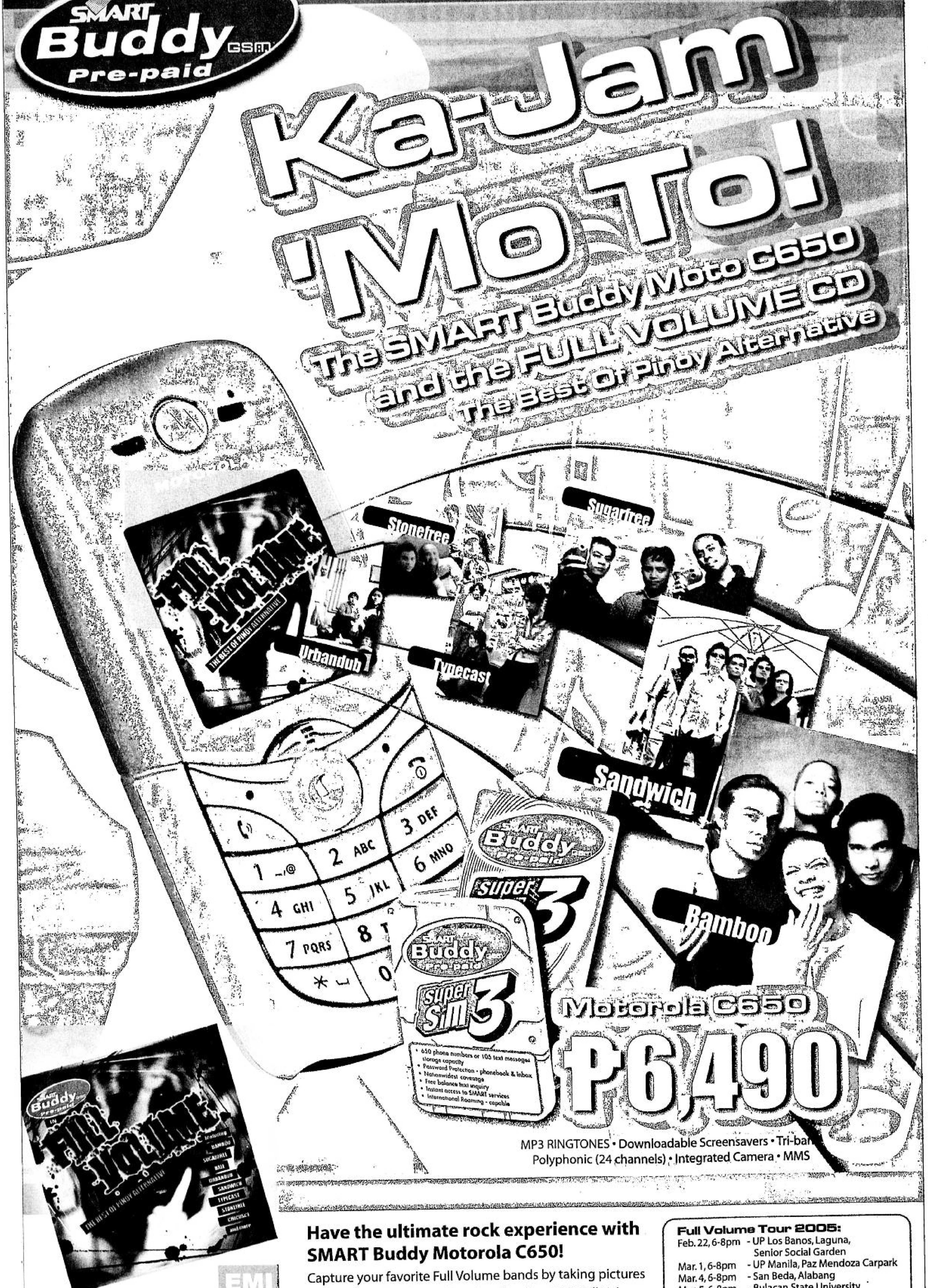
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Cops foil Zambo bomb plot

ZAMBOANGA CITY—The police here foiled an alleged plan of the Abu Sayyaf to bomb parts of the city following the arrest of a suspected member of the bandit group in Barangay Baliwasan on Thursday.

Chief Supt. Vidal Querol, Western Area Police commander, declined to reveal the areas where the attacks were supposed to take place.

He said Nassid Tahjid, who was arrested on Thursday, was a bomb expert allegedly trained by Abu Sayyaf spokesperson Abu Sulayman.

Supt. Angelito Casimiro, regional police intelligence chief, said Tahjid had been identified as a bomb-making expert by two former captives and a former Abu Sayyaf member now under the Department of Justice' s Witness Protection Program.

Casimiro said Tahjid was "waiting for the chemical components for explosives from General Santos" when he was arrested, thanks to a tip from residents who noticed him "always moving at night with some companions."

"So instead of waiting for Tahjid to make more bombs, we immediately pinned him down," Querol said.

Tahjid allegedly participated in the abduction of schoolchildren and teachers in Basilan in 2000, and the kidnapping of guests at the Dos Palmas Resort in Puerto Princesa in 2001.

Casimiro said Tahjid was planning to plant bombs in highly volatile installations like gas depots and gasoline stations in this city.

THREATS of terrorism in the south does not deter US envoy Richard Ricciardone from visiting Cotabato City to oversee livelihood projects funded by his government. AFP

In Davao City, Mayor Rodrigo Duterte said authorities were very close to catching the suspects behind the bomb explosion at the Davao City Overland Transport Terminal that killed a 12-year-old boy and wounded six others.

"We are catching up with them. Just give us enough time," he told reporters on Thursday at the Philippine Public Safety College Regional Training School in Tugbok district in Davao City.

Duterte said they had already identified the group that masterminded the terminal bombing but refused to name the members so as not to jeopardize the ongoing investigation.

He said he was inclined to believe that a 10-year-old boy left the bag that reportedly contained the bomb which exploded at the terminal's Gate I. He added that this was not the same boy who died in the explosion.

In General Santos City, PNP chief Director Gen. Edgardo Aglipay ordered a manhunt for the suspect in the St. Valentine's Day bombing of Gaisano Mall, which killed three civilians and injured 43 others.

Chief Supt. Antonio Billones, Central Mindanao police director, told the INQUIRER that Aglipay had issued the order during his short visit to the city on Thursday to attend the PNP Day celebration of Central Mindanao Police Command.

"His order was for us to expedite the capture of the suspect," Billones said. *Julie S. Alipala, Anthony S. Allada and Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Newsmen in Jolo told: Be extra careful

By Alcuin Papa

THE MILITARY has warned journalists covering the conflict in Sulu to be "extra careful" that they are not taken hostage by Moro rebels.

Military information chief Lt. Col. Buenaventura Pascual issued the warning yesterday, after receiving intelligence that the Abu Sayyaf kidnap gang and armed followers of former Moro National Liberation Front chief Nur Misuari had invited key media personalities for exclusive interviews in their camps in the jungles of Sulu.

Pascual said there was a "high probability" that these media personalities, in their desire to score a scoop, would be held hostage by the rebels.

Journalists who fail to heed the warning should be ready to face the consequences of their actions, he said.

"The Armed Forces of the Philippines has received reports that key leaders of the Abu Sayyaf and the Misuari breakaway group are inviting media reporters for exclusive interviews in Sulu. Please do not accept this offer," Pascual warned.

"The Abu Sayyaf has done this before that resulted in the abduction of press people," Pascual said.

At the height of the Sipadan hostage crisis in nearby Basilan island in 2000, several foreign and local journalists who were allowed to enter the bandits' lair for interviews ended up being hostaged by the terrorists. Some of these journalists were later released after paying ransom. They were also robbed of their personal belongings.

Pascual stressed that military operations against the Abu Sayyaf and the MNLF breakaway group were still under way. He appealed to media to "cooperate" with the military and not complicate the situation in Sulu.

"The military operations are ongoing against these terrorists. Your cooperation will speed up our task. Remember the Abu Sayyaf and Misuari breakaway group are ruthless killers," he said.

Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz meanwhile commended the former MNLF guerrillas who were conscripted into military service.

"The performance of the integrees is commendable," Cruz told reporters in Camp Aguinaldo yesterday, citing a report Deputy Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Edilberto Adan.

There has been concern in military circles about the loyalty of the MNLF integrees who, it is feared, might switch allegiance in the battlefield and engage government forces.

"They (the integrees) understand the situation that these groups must be defeated because they are terrorists who have different methodologies and will harm innocent people," Cruz said.

The integration of former MNLF members into the military was part of the provisions of the peace agreement that the MNLF, the main Muslim insurgency, concluded with the government in 1996.

Moro rebel chief open to truce but also ready to fight to the end

A MORO rebel commander battling troops on Jolo island said that his forces would be open to a cease-fire but is ready to fight to the end if the military doesn't stop pursuing them.

"We're on active defense. If they punch us, we will punch back," Habir Malik, a follower of jailed Muslim rebel leader Nur Misuari, said by satellite phone late Thursday.

He said any cease-fire should be initiated by the government, otherwise "the killing will continue, the war would continue."

About 3,000 soldiers and marines have been pursuing Misuari's followers—backed by al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf guerrillas—since they attacked an army detachment in Panamao town on Feb. 7, provoking clashes that killed 27 soldiers and wounded 72 others. Troops have killed 37 gunmen and wounded scores of others, the military said.

The rebels claimed the attacks were in retaliation for the deaths of several people, including a child, who were caught in crossfire when troops assaulted a community of Misuari's followers while pursuing suspected Abu Sayyaf members.

"They are killing even children, women . . . if we don't react, nothing will happen so we just reacted," Malik said.

He also denied that his group has banded with the Abu Sayyaf.

"We are against the Abu Sayyaf. I am against their activities. Their ways do not conform with Islam," he added.

An Abu Sayyaf spokesman, Abu Solaiman, earlier claimed Abu Sayyaf militants have joined Misuari's followers in fighting government troops to avenge the death of the child and its parents, who were related to some Misuari followers and Abu Sayyaf members.

Solaiman also claimed responsibility for the Valentine's Day bombings in Manila and two other cities that killed seven people and wounded at least 123 others. *AP*

Philippine College of Occupational Medicine, Inc.
27th Annual National Convention
"Strengthening Linkages Toward a Healthy Workplace"
Edsa Shangri-La Hotel, Mandaluyong City February 20-22, 2005

MESSAGES

My warmest greetings to the officers and members of the Philippine College of Occupational Medicine, Inc. on your Annual National Convention. The theme of your Convention, "Strengthening Linkages Toward a Healthy Workplace" is very relevant as we bring together our efforts to raise and strengthen people's awareness on the importance of occupational safety and health in the workplace. For almost 40 years, PCOM has been the forerunner of occupational medicine, and its efforts have been ably supported by a network of 14 chapters all over the country, all espousing the need to care for the workers' health and maximize productivity. We believe that it was your ardent desire to spread the word that has entitled your organization to the respect it now enjoys, not only from the labor sector but also from members of the academe and private organizations.

We join PCOM in its campaign to promote a healthy workplace. We share in your belief that despite the introduction of modern technology in the workplace, the worker and his welfare must always be our primary concern as employers. This Convention, therefore, is a great opportunity to contribute your expertise and experience in this particular field to improve the overall health and working conditions with the end in view of improving the quality of life. Congratulations!

FRANCISCO T. DUQUE III, MD, Msc
President and CEO, PhilHealth (Keynote Speaker)

Warm felicitations to all delegates of the 27th PCOM Annual Convention.

Your active participation is our utmost desire to truly achieve our goal in strengthening our links toward a healthy workplace.

JESSE C. BAYLON, MD, FPCOM
National President

With great pride and pleasure, we welcome you to the 27th Annual National Convention of the Philippine College of Occupational Medicine.

This is an opportunity for all of us to once again meet, exchange ideas, knowledge as well as bring to the table important issues related to the art and practice of Occupational Medicine.

Our theme, "Strengthening Linkages Toward a Healthy Workplace" expresses the need and importance of being able to fortify our relationship of working more closely with other specialties, institutions, government and other occupational health agencies for a more holistic, meaningful and relevant practice of Occupational Medicine. We look forward to a very successful convention!

OSCAR D. TINIO, MD, FPCOM
National Vice President & Overall Convention Chair

PROGRAM AT A GLANCE

	Sunday, 20 February	Monday, 21 February	Tuesday, 22 February
07.30	Sports Activities Bowling Badminton Preconference Workshop Basic DOTS Workshop for Referring Physicians	Opening Ceremonies Dr. Francisco Duque Keynote Speaker	Dr. Gregorio Dizon Memorial Lecture Medical Practice: Etiology and Pathogenesis
08.00			
08.30			Presentation of PCOM Lifetime Achievement Award to Dr. Rosario Dy
09.00			
09.30		Opening of Exhibits	Coffee Break
10.00		The Role of Sibutramine in the Management of Obesity and Cardiovascular Risks	
10.30		Session I Strengthening Occupational Health Partnerships	Strengthening Occupational Health Partnerships Session II Enhancing Collaboration with Professional Medical Societies
11.00			
11.30			
12.00			
12.30	Luncheon Symposium Cardiovascular Benefits of Atorvastatin among Diabetics	Luncheon Symposium Total Lipid Management in Dyslipidemia	Luncheon Symposium Pharmacoeconomics of Influenza Vaccination
13.00			
13.30			
14.00			
14.30	Special Training Workshops Contact Dermatitis and Patch Testing Occupational Asthma and Bronchoprovocation Test Noise-induced Hearing Loss Research Presentations in Occupational Medicine	Viewing of Poster Presentations and Business Meeting (Elections)	Session III Enhancing Professional and Personal Development
15.00			
15.30			Coffee Break
16.00			Session IV Enhancing Occupational Health Practice
16.30		The Reemerging Role of NSAIDs in Pain Therapy	
17.00	Holy Mass	Pharmacoeconomics in Asthma: The Industrial Setting	
17.30		Fellowship Night Scientific Lecture A Step Closer to Idea Presentations of PCOM Chapters	Free Time
18.00			
18.30			Closing Ceremonies Mayor Neptali M. Gonzales, II Guest of Honor Induction of New Fellows Induction of New PCOM National Officers and Board of Directors Awarding of Most Outstanding Chapter: PCOM Cavite Chapter
19.00			
19.30	PCOM National Officers & Board Members' Meeting with Chapter Presidents		
20.00			
20.30			
21.00			
21.30			
22.00			

The **Philippine College of Occupational Medicine, Inc. (PCOM)** is the prime mover of occupational health activities in the country. It is recognized by the Department of Labor and Employment and the Philippine Medical Association as the specialty association in Occupational Medicine. PCOM is an affiliate member of the International Commission on Occupational Health (ICOH) and the Asian Association of Occupational Health (AAOH). Through its 14 chapters nationwide, it provides a vital link in the economy and progress of the country through a healthy workforce in a safe working place. The 2556 member physicians advocate the promotion of health, safety, prevention and management of diseases of workers in all occupations all over the country.

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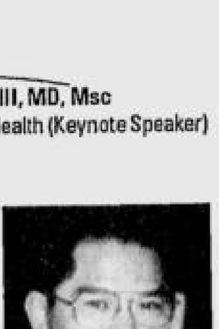

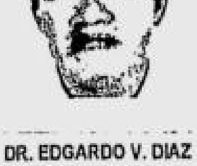

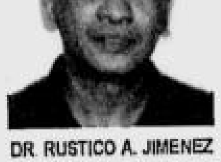

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SC sacks 4 court workers

Philip C. Tubeza

THE SUPREME Court has dismissed four court employees in Rizal, two of them for failing to remit P1.2 million worth of collections for the Judiciary Development Fund and other court funds.

In a 41-page decision, the tribunal dismissed Binangonan Regional Trial Court clerk of court Manuel Banting of Binangonan and Clerk III Ma. Luisa Tuazon of Binangonan for failing to remit P1,242,117.38.

It also sacked two other Rizal clerks of court—Ermelina Bernardino of Cardona and Libertad San Juan of Pililia-Jala-Jala for failing to remit their collections on time.

"The conduct and behavior of everyone connected with an office charged with the dispensation of justice, the courts below not excepted, from the presiding judge to the lowest clerk, must be circumscribed with the heavy burden of responsibility," the tribunal said.

The court found them guilty of gross neglect of duty, dishonesty, and grave misconduct and forfeited all of their retirement benefits, except accrued leave credits. They were also barred from reemployment in government, including government-owned and -controlled corporations.

The court ordered Banting and Tuazon to restitute or give back, within 30 days, the missing court funds and for the Office of the Court Administrator to ensure that criminal cases are filed against them.

The tribunal noted that it had issued circulars mandating that the daily collections for the court funds should be deposited every day with the Land Bank of the Philippines and that clerks of court and accountable officers should submit monthly reports of collections to the high court within a prescribed period.

But in August 1996, the tribunal discovered that there were irregularities in the JDF collection and remittances in the courts in Rizal province.

The Office of the Court Administrator immediately conducted an audit and discovered that Banting failed to remit P1.2 million worth of JDF funds.

The tribunal rejected Banting's claim that Tuazon should be blamed for the mess since she was the one who collected the fees and recorded the transactions.

The court said Banting had general supervision over all personnel since he was the clerk of court of the Binangonan RTC. However, it also found Tuazon liable for the shortage since she was the cashier and cash clerk.

The tribunal also noted that Tuazon had abandoned her post at the Binangonan court.

Beware of drugs you buy in Ilocos, DOH warns

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE DEPARTMENT of Health yesterday revealed that 80 percent of drugstores and pharmacies in the Ilocos region were selling counterfeit drugs made of ash or flour.

A random inspection by DOH regional officials last year found nine drugstores in the region's four provinces selling fake drugs.

Eduardo Janairo, Ilocos regional director, said samples of the drugs that were confiscated and brought to the Bureau of Food and Drugs showed that they were made of ash or flour while some were imported but not registered with the BFAD.

Janairo said the drug outlets that were selling the counterfeit drugs were issued preventive closure orders.

The BFAD, which launched an awareness campaign on counterfeit drugs last year, said the most common counterfeit drug products inspectors found in drugstores were:

- anti-hypertensive such as Adalat Gits 30mg
- anti-asthma such as Ventolin Expectorant syrup
- analgesic such as Ponstan 500
- anti-diarrhea such as Diatabs Reformulated, and
- vitamins such as Propan with Iron Capsule, Ceelin 100 mg/5 ml syrup, Enervon C and Iberet 500.

The government monitored 206 drug outlets last year and collected 1,176 drug products for quality and safe checks.

The laboratory analysis done on 20 of the said products showed that they did not conform to label claims, Nancy Lanuza, division chief of the BFAD regulatory division 1, said in a statement.

NEWSBRIEFS

Ship blast kills Pinoy

A FILIPINO seaman was killed while another was seriously injured after a gas cylinder exploded on board a ship docked in Labuan, eastern Malaysia, the Department of Labor and Employment reported yesterday. Labor Attaché to Malaysia Brenda Villafuerte identified the fatality as Segundino Castro, who was in his 50s. She named the injured as Vicente Parcon, 29, of Zamboanga City, currently confined at the Labuan Hospital for severe burns. Villafuerte, citing the report of the Labuan fire and rescue department chief Hamsa Isnurde, said a gas cylinder exploded on board MV Ocean Speed, which is docked in a jetty for repairs, around 2:30 p.m. Thursday. Castro was hurled into the sea while Parcon caught fire. It was presumed that the two were among the crew repairing the ship, whose captain, Dioscoro Maniva, was also a Filipino. *Jerome Aning*

Capalla off to Banda Aceh

RECIPROCATING the help it received for the typhoon victims last year, the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines would turn over donations for the tsunami victims in Indonesia today. Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla, CBCP president, left for Banda Aceh yesterday with what he said was "a small amount" collected from parishes and schools all over the Philippines. Capalla also brought letters of hope written by children in a Pasig school to encourage their fellow children who lost their families in the biggest natural disaster to hit the globe in decades. About one-third of the fatalities in the Dec. 26 tsunami were children, according to reports by international aid agencies. Capalla would hand over the donations to the Archbishop of Medan Aceh, the nearest Catholic city in the Muslim-dominated Aceh province. He said the same Pasig school that asked him to deliver the letters also coughed up around P400,000 in donations for the tsunami victims. *Blanche S. Rivera*

US to give DND $4M

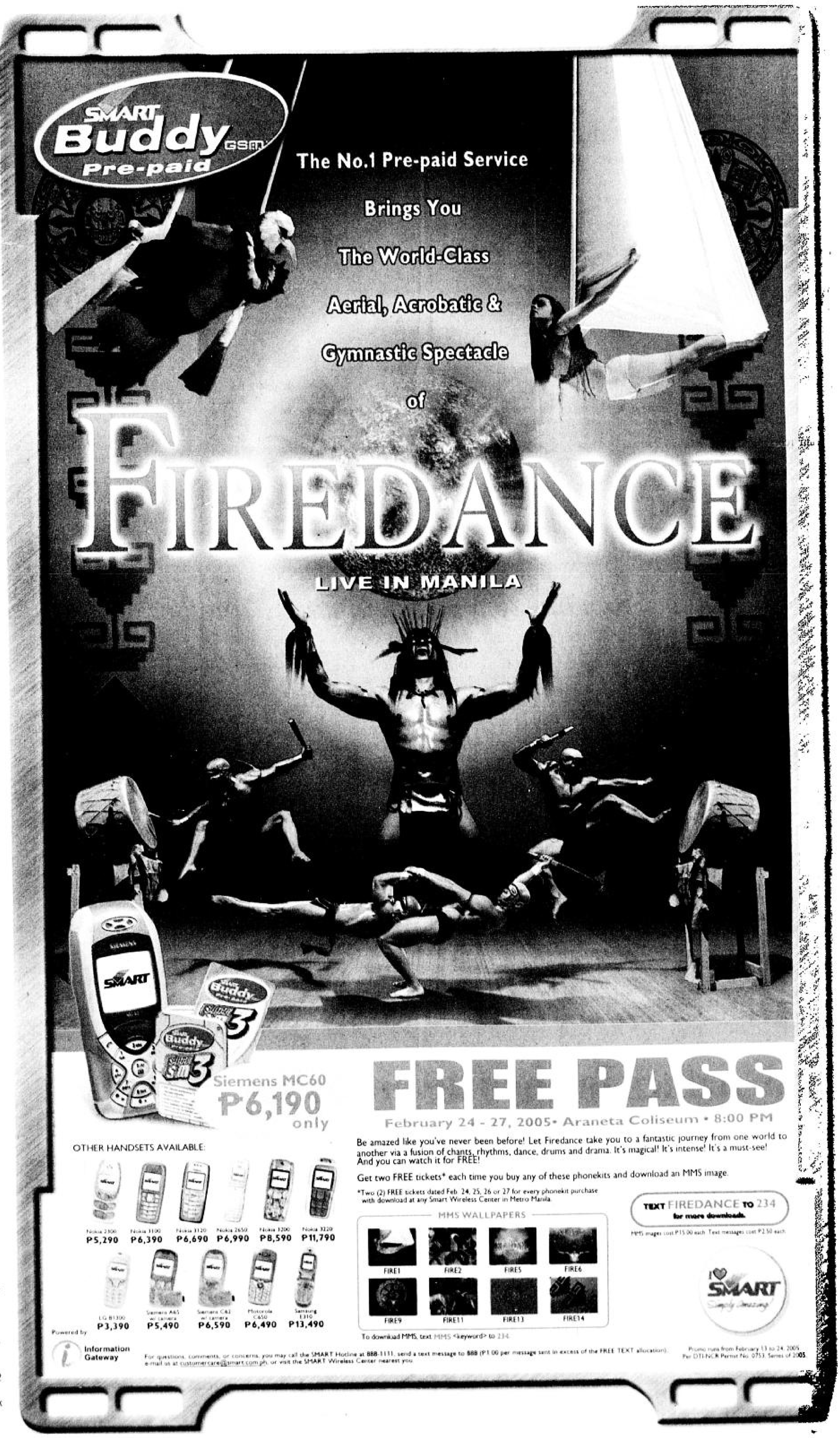
THE DEFENSE department is set to receive this year $4 million in assistance from the United States to be used for the development of intelligence capability of the Philippine military to fight terrorism. In an interview with reporters in Camp Aguinaldo yesterday, Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz said the amount would be used primarily to upgrade equipment and training of intelligence agents. "There is a four-million dollar assistance that the Americans have allocated to assist us in the upgrade of equipment and training of intelligence elements. I think we would be able to draw this (from the US government) this year," Cruz said. He stressed the need to improve the intelligence gathering capability of the military following a series of bomb attacks in Makati, Gen. Santos City and Davao City on Valentine's Day. "(There's a need to) keep on assessing, keep on preparing and keep on improving (the) intelligence (of the AFP). This (US assistance) can improve training, improve equipment, and improve structures so that the intelligence service of the armed forces would be efficient," Cruz explained. *Alcuin Papa*

Hope for hurting marriages

RETROUVAILLE is a program to help hurting couples heal and renew their marriage relationship. The word, Retrouvaille, simply means "rediscovery." The program offers the chance to rediscover yourself, your spouse, and a loving relationship in your marriage. Tens of thousands of couples headed for separation have successfully saved their marriages by joining the program. Retrouvaille is a live-in weekend and post-weekend program for married couples where they are encouraged to put the past behind and start "rediscovering" one another again. The weekend is not a miracle cure so post-weekend sessions have been designed to continue the marriage renewal that began on the weekend. A Retrouvaille weekend will be held on March 11-13 at the SAIDI Formation House, Antipolo City. For details, call Fr. Dave Clay at 523-3361, Willie and Aleth at 800-5902, and Merit and Bernie at (0917) 795-0682. All names will be kept in strict confidence. To learn more about the program, visit the Retrouvaille International website, http://retrouvaille.org or call (02) 742-5487.

Soriano; 79

ALBERTO V. Soriano died on Feb. 17 in Parañaque City. He was 79. Soriano was the husband of Enriqueta Alerta of Jaro, Iloilo City and father of Karen, married to Amadeo "Jake" Macasaet; Agnes, married to Rome Alerta; and Enriqueta, wife of Dr. Roberto M. Zalde. He had eight grandchildren and nine great grandchildren. Soriano's body lies in state in Funeraria Paz, Sucat Road, Parañaque City. He will be buried at the Loyola Memorial, Parañaque, on Feb. 20, after a 2 p.m. Mass. Soriano lived and worked with his daughter Agnes and husband Romeo in New York from 1974 to 1995. He was born in Pili, Camarines Sur on March 8, 1925.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JOAN BONDOC

THE CASE for Lucio Tan is argued by his lawyer Estelito Mendoza while State Prosecutors Susan Dacanay, Estella Sales and Roberto Abad listen. Documents galore from the DOJ and BIR, which constitute the evidence against Tan and 69 others, may be partly seen on the table at the Marikina Metropolitan Trial Court.

Lucio Tan tax pre-trial stalled

By Luige A. del Puerto

MORE than a decade has passed and three Presidents installed in office, but the P25-billion tax evasion case against the country's richest man continues to be bogged down at the pre-trial level.

At the end of a lengthy debate at the sala of Judge Alex Ruiz of the Marikina Metropolitan Trial Court yesterday, the only thing that the prosecution and the defense managed to agree on was to hold once a week the process of marking the government's huge volume of evidence against tobacco and beer tycoon Lucio Tan.

At this rate, it would take at least six months to finish marking all the documents, which is not even part of the trial proper, state prosecutors said.

Defense lawyer Estelito Mendoza used his considerable legal skills into holding down the prosecution and getting his way to have the evidence pre-marked.

By prosecutor Susan Dacanay's estimate, it would take some 35 days to mark all the documents. At the rate of once a week, that would take at least half a year to finish. And that concerned only the pre-marking of evidence, not the trial proper itself, she said.

How to speed up trial

At one point, Mendoza, a former justice secretary of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos and who also represented ousted President Estrada in his impeachment trial, twitted the government, suggesting that it should "match the P27 billion" it is after.

Since the case is very important to the government, it should assign "50 prosecutors or 100 prosecutors" to it to speed up the trial, Mendoza told the court.

The government started the case against Tan in 1993 during the term of President Ramos but has so far failed to win a conviction.

Tan pleaded not guilty to charges that he allegedly failed to pay taxes totaling P25.6 billion between 1990 and 1992 during his arraignment at the Marikina Metropolitan Trial Court on Jan. 8.

The lower court had dismissed the charges against Tan and 51 others in 1999 but reopened the tax cases last year after the Supreme Court ordered a retrial.

'Dummy' companies

The government alleged that Tan and officers of his Fortune Tobacco Corp. used nine "dummy" marketing companies to avoid paying P25.6 billion in excise, income and value-added taxes for the years 1990, 1991 and 1992.

Among the documents that the prosecution brought to court yesterday were stacks of the daily manufacturing records of Fortune Tobacco that looked like they could fill up an entire cabinet.

A Bureau of Internal Revenue official said they needed three vans to transport the documents, although a number of passengers also shared the vans.

To simplify and reduce the number of documents for pre-marking, the prosecution had submitted to the defense a list of proposed facts to be stipulated, that is, facts that the two sides could already agree to admit in court.

'Truckloads'

But Mendoza refused, insisting that the law required the 'truckloads' of documentary evidence to be pre-marked.

"Apparently, Mr. Mendoza just closed his eyes. He did not even read the entire proposed stipulation. [He] made an outright refusal," said State Prosecutor Edna Valenzuela.

Had the defense agreed to the proposal, half of the documentary evidence would not need to be presented and marked as evidence, reducing the trial time.

The presentation of evidence would have been limited only to "those facts that cannot be admitted," said Valenzuela.

The pre-marking exercise would have been reduced by 50 percent, she said.

Only partial evidence

But Mendoza said he could not agree to a stipulation of facts at this time since he had not seen the entire evidence of the prosecution.

"That was just partial [evidence]. Why should I agree to it? I want to see their entire case," retorted Mendoza.

He wanted the pre-marking exercise to be done "every day," a proposal that the prosecutors said would be impossible as they had other duties.

It was at this point that Mendoza suggested that the government match its zeal for going after Tan's money with "50 to 100 prosecutors."

He said the prosecutors assigned to the Tan case—Dacanay and Valenzuela—should be relieved of their other duties so they can concentrate on the case.

Prosecutors say no

Valenzuela protested that she and Dacanay had "equally important cases" to attend to.

"We have previously scheduled hearings, and we cannot just change that because of the mere suggestion of the defense that it be done daily," she said.

Antiterror bill: 'Taxes today, less liberties tomorrow'

From page A1

least until Congress goes on its Lenten break.

In a phone interview, Drilon said the weeks before the Lenten break would see the chamber devoting its time to approving economic measures.

For one, he said, the Senate was still busy with the approval of the amendments to the proposed expanded value-added tax law. He said Congress was expected to next put priority on the banking industry.

"We have no time to take up [the proposed antiterrorism law]. If we do so, it will be to the prejudice of the economic bills," he said.

Drilon recalled that last year's congressional debates on the matter had been "contentious."

"It's something new and involves a lot of uncovered ground. It's not an easy measure to pass," he said.

Public suffering

For Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, a Philippine antiterror law is not necessary.

"I don't want for the Senate to rush or prioritize this bill because all antiterrorism bills everywhere in the world have always resulted in provisions that in effect run counter to the Bill of Rights of any particular country," Santiago said in a phone interview.

"In other words," she said, "an antiterror bill makes the entire public suffer for the criminal acts of a few."

According to Santiago, among the things that citizens will face with an antiterrorism law in place are curfews and checkpoints, signaling "a general reduction of the liberties and freedom of the general citizenry."

She said that even if an antiterrorism bill was passed, "no country has been safe from terrorism."

"Apparently, nothing in our history of law enforcement indicates that these restrictions and limitations on individual freedom were able to prevent a terrorist attack," she said. "So what's the point?"

Secession

Santiago said it would be difficult to come up with an antiterror law, and noted that "the better solution to terrorism is to address the cause of terrorism."

"And in our country, it appears to be the desire for secession," she said.

The government should address the secession problem as it concerns national policy, Santiago said, adding:

"[Secession] is not an issue of criminality and law enforcement."

Against Muslims

Anak Mindanao Rep. Mujiv Hataman warned that the proposed antiterror law would likely be used against Muslims.

"When people speak of terrorists, the concept is that they are always Muslims," the party-list representative said in a phone interview.

Hataman yesterday led a rally of 100 Muslims at the Don Chino Roces Bridge in Manila, where they condemned the Valentine's Day bombings and expressed opposition to the passage of an antiterror bill.

He said his constituents feared that the proposed law would likely be used to harass or discriminate against the followers of Islam.

"Why the need for such a bill when there is a Revised Penal Code (RPC)?" Hataman said.

He said that if lawmakers were bent on pushing for the passage of the measure, they should explain why it was needed and why it would not duplicate provisions in the RPC.

Hataman also said that instead of focusing on the antiterrorism bill, police and military officials should intensify their intelligence-gathering skills.

He said the P200-million intelligence budget should have gone a long way, especially since the amount was bigger than the entire budget of a number of government agencies.

Sufficient powers

Another antiterror measure, filed by Eastern Samar Rep. Marcelino Libanan, is pending at the House.

But Deputy Minority Leader and Sorsogon Rep. Francis Escudero and other party-list representatives—Liza Maza of Gabriela and Joel Virador of Bayan Muna—said there was no need for an antiterror law.

"The President has enough powers to address the situation. There is no need for special powers or a new law to enable her to effectively combat the problem of terrorism," Escudero said.

Maza said the government should not "burn the whole house to catch a few rats."

She said the consolidated bill being drafted by the House committee on justice also contained provisions on warrantless arrests and 30-day detention without charges.

These, she said, would constitute a flagrant violation of basic human rights because these would punish mere membership or suspicion of membership in an organization that the government had defined as terrorist.

"The country must not be ruled by paranoia but by reason. We must also protect the people from these infringements on civil liberties," Maza said.

'McCarthyist'

Virador said progressive groups in the House would block the passage of the consolidated bill once it is submitted for plenary voting.

He said such a "McCarthyist measure" would only fuel further public unrest as it would do away with what remained of the people's civil, political and human rights.

"The operational definition of terrorism is so vague and unwieldy that any activity can be encompassed and labeled as an act of terror," he said.

Too much

Virador also said the tax measures being imposed by the government on the people were already too much for them to bear and could cause widespread dissension. *Reports from Michael Lim Ubac, Christine O. Avendaño, Cynthia D. Balana and Leila Salaverria*

Negroponte: From one tough assignment to another

WASHINGTON—Putting the acute difficulty of his new job as US intelligence chief in perspective, John D. Negroponte said Thursday it was the most challenging assignment he has had in 40 years of government service.

And that says quite a bit, since the 65-year-old Negroponte's last two posts were US ambassador to Iraq in the midst of a bloody anti-US uprising and, before that, ambassador to the United Nations when US relations with the world organization were declining over the looming war to depose President Saddam Hussein.

President George W. Bush, at a White House news conference with Negroponte at his side, gave some indication of the difficulty of his adviser's latest task, saying he would be in overall charge of all US intelligence with the goal of "stopping terrorists before they strike."

According to one well-informed administration official, former CIA director Robert Gates was Bush's first choice but Gates and several other candidates declined the post. They worried that the legislation establishing the intelligence job was too vague in outlining its authority, said the official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Born in London, the son of a Greek shipping magnate, Negroponte has not been free of controversy in his career. As US ambassador to Honduras and its military-run government from 1981 to 1985, Negroponte was suspected of a key role in carrying out the covert strategy of the Reagan administration to crush the Sandinista government in Nicaragua.

The Reagan administration's support of the anti-Sandinista Contra rebels in Nicaragua and its sale of missiles to Iran in connection with the US hostages held there turned into the Iran-Contra scandal that rocked President Reagan's second term.

Honduras, itself, was accused of human rights abuses while Negroponte held the ambassador's post. Negroponte's nomination for the UN post was confirmed by the Senate in September 2001 only after a half-year delay caused mostly by criticism of his record in Honduras.

For weeks before his Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing, Negroponte was questioned by staff members on whether he had acquiesced to human rights abuses by a Honduran death squad funded and partly trained by the Central Intelligence Agency.

Negroponte testified that he did not believe the abuses were part of a deliberate Honduran government policy. "To this day," he said, "I do not believe that death squads were operating in Honduras."

But Leo Valladares, a law professor who was Honduras' first human rights commissioner afterward, said, "He knew about the abuses and violations of human rights of those the United States considered subversives."

In a report in 1993, Valladares blamed a US-trained battalion for the disappearance of 184 suspected leftists.

At the United Nations, Negroponte had the difficult assignment of trying to convince the UN Security Council to approve force against Saddam Hussein and then defending Bush's decision to invade Iraq over the objections of France, Germany, Russia and others.

Bush, in his disappointment with the allies, suggested the United Nations had become irrelevant, which didn't make the US representative's job any easier.

Then, taking over as ambassador to Iraq after the war, Negroponte oversaw the buildup of the US diplomatic corps there to the largest in the world while trying to cope with deadly attacks on US and other coalition troops and Iraqi security forces.

In all, Negroponte held eight foreign service posts in Asia, Europe and Latin America before Bush recruited him from the corporate world for the UN assignment.

He was deputy assistant for national security in the administration of Bush's father, George H.W. Bush, and then was ambassador to Mexico and to the Philippines. *AP*

Bush names former RP envoy spy chief

From page A1

service." Said Bush: "He understands the power centers in Washington."

Bush named Lt. Gen. Mike Hayden, who has served as director of the National Security Agency since March 1999, as Negroponte's deputy. He is the longest serving director of the secretive codebreaking agency and has pushed for changes, such as asking longtime agency veterans to retire and increasing reliance on technology contractors.

"If we're going to stop the terrorists before they strike," Bush said, "we must ensure that our intelligence agencies work as a single, unified enterprise."

Negroponte, 65, was at the United Nations when he was tapped to take on the delicate job of transforming the US presence in Iraq from that of an occupier to that of an adviser. Bush chose him for the job last April and he went to Baghdad hours after the handover of sovereignty to Iraq's interim government.

Getting it right

Negroponte has also been ambassador to Mexico and Honduras.

Even before the name was revealed, White House press secretary Scott McClellan defended the lengthy period of time it took to find a nominee.

"This is a position of critical importance and the president wanted to make sure he gets it right," Bush's spokesperson said. "This individual will have the full authority to do the job that needs to be done and will have the full confidence of the president of the United States."

The Sept. 11, 2001 terror attacks on New York and Washington were the impetus for legislation passed by Congress and signed by Bush, creating the new position. The bill represented the most sweeping intelligence legislation in over 50 years.

The director of national intelligence will hold a pre-eminent role in US national security affairs and coordinate the work of all 15 US intelligence agencies.

In a statement, the chair of the Senate Intelligence Committee, Republican Pat Roberts, said he was pleased by the selection of Negroponte and Hayden.

"Both have significant national security and intelligence backgrounds. When the ambassador called me this morning, he told me he looks forward to appearing before the committee for his confirmation hearing and seeking our advice as we move forward with the new intelligence reform legislation," Roberts said. "We will hold the ambassadors' confirmation hearing as soon as his duties in Iraq are completed."

Record in Honduras

Roberts spokesperson Sarah Little said Negroponte told the senator he would need to return to Iraq to tie up issues there. Little said that Roberts believes the confirmation may be weeks away.

As ambassador to the United Nations, Negroponte helped win unanimous approval of a Security Council resolution that demanded Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein comply with UN mandates to disarm. Negroponte worked to expand the role for international security forces in Afghanistan after the overthrow of the Taliban government.

Negroponte's confirmation to the United Nations post was delayed a half-year mostly because of criticism of his record as the US ambassador to Honduras from 1981 to 1985. In Honduras, he played a prominent role in assisting the Contras in Nicaragua in their war with the left-wing Sandinista government.

Human rights groups alleged that Negroponte acquiesced in human rights abuses by Honduran death squads funded and partly trained by the CIA. Negroponte testified during the hearings for the UN post that he did not believe death squads were operating in Honduras.

Negative reports

In the past year, the intelligence community has been faced with a series of negative reports, including the work of the Sept. 11 commission and the Senate Intelligence Committee's inquiry on the flawed Iraq intelligence. And next month, Bush's commission to investigate the intelligence community's capabilities on weapons of mass destruction is also expected to submit its findings. *AP*

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Burmese leader arriving tomorrow

SOE WIN

BURMESE Prime Minister Lt. Gen. Soe Win is scheduled to arrive in Manila tomorrow night for an official visit, the Department of Foreign Affairs said yesterday.

Soe Win, who succeeded ousted Khin Nyunt last year, is scheduled to meet with President Macapagal-Arroyo and Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo on Monday during his one-day visit, officials said.

The leaders are expected to discuss ways of boosting bilateral relations, but it was not clear whether imprisoned Burmese opposition leader and Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi would be a topic in the talks.

In an annual summit of Southeast Asian leaders in November last year, Arroyo urged Soe Win to allow Suu Kyi greater representation in the government. She, however, stopped short of calling for Suu Kyi's release.

Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy party won elections in 1990, but the ruling military junta has refused to honor the victory. She remains under house arrest in the Burmese capital Yangon.

Burma (Myanmar) and the Philippines are members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) and Burma's continued detention of Suu Kyi has been an embarrassment for the grouping.

Asean, however, believes in "constructive engagement" in dealing with Burma despite international condemnation.

Soe Win's visit is part of his traditional call on leaders of the Asean member-countries, officials said yesterday.

"It's customary practice for a new leader to call on leaders of Asean member-countries," an official said, but could not give specifics of his one-on-one meetings with Ms Arroyo.

Romulo hinted that the government would appeal anew to the Burmese leader to abide by the "roadmap to democracy" by allowing Suu Kyi to participate in mainstream politics.

"We certainly have been doing our part in reminding Myanmar of its commitment to the roadmap to democracy, in reminding Myanmar that this roadmap to democracy is important in order for us to justify Asean's continued support," he told reporters.

The President met Soe Win on the sidelines of the 10th Asean leaders' summit in Laos in November last year, where she urged him to allow Suu Kyi and the NLD to take part in Burma's national convention.

Soe Win, for his part, said that his government had sent an invitation to Suu Kyi to join the convention, but she declined it.

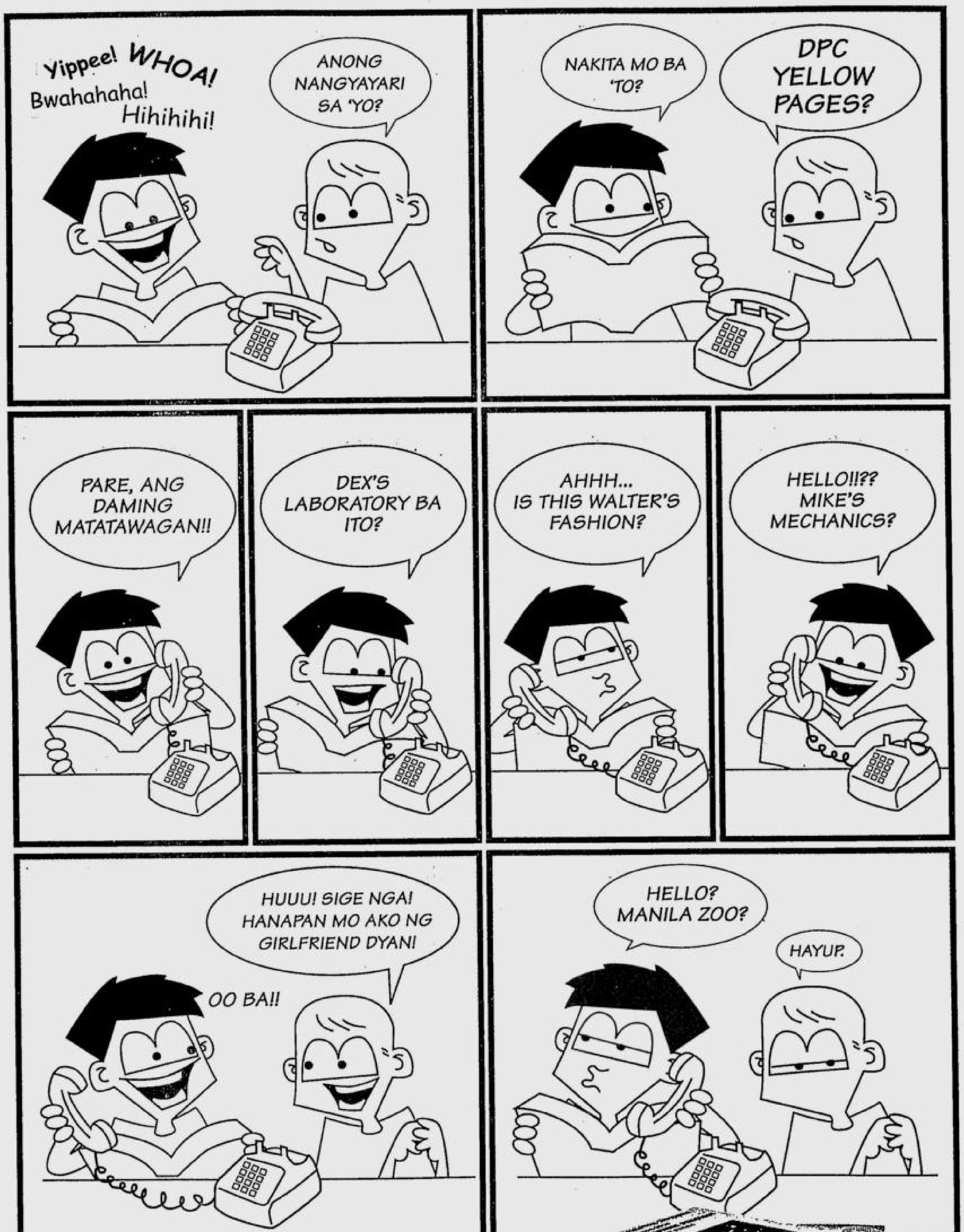
"At that meeting, the President reiterated that it's the hope of the Asean countries that Myanmar will abide by its roadmap to democracy, and that part of that roadmap to democracy means that the NLD, as well as Aung San Suu Kyi, would participate in the old party conference that is supposed to be held soon," Romulo said.

"And during the foreign ministers conference, I myself delivered that same message to the foreign minister of Myanmar," he added.

Soe Win had given assurance that the national convention will be followed by a referendum to ratify Burma's constitution.

By assuming the post of prime minister, Soe Win became No. 3 in the leadership behind junta leader Than Shwe and State Peace and Development Council vice-chair, Vice-Senior Gen. Maung Aye.

Reports from TJ Burgonio and AFP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House sets probe of phone firms' rate-fixing

THE HOUSE of Representatives will look into the way cellular phone companies fix the rates they charge subscribers to make sure the public is not overcharged.

Rep. Rodolfo Albano III, in a privilege speech, said the inquiry is meant to "encourage competition, prevent monopolist control or cartelization of the industry, and protect the welfare of the consumers."

Albano took the floor following the filing of separate but similar complaints by Globe and Smart with the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) last month asking NTC to stop Sun Cellular from continuing its popular 24/7 unlimited service.

He said: "I condemn any and all efforts to kill competition in the telecommunications industry and to allow the monopoly by a virtual cartel of telecommunications giants. Congress must step in to protect the welfare of consumers to allow them not only freedom of choice in a competitive market but to ensure their greater access to affordable mobile phone services."

In their complaints, Smart and Globe through their smaller subsidiaries, accused Sun of offering very low rates to kill competition and eventually monopolize the industry. They also said Sun's service is below par, which should be reason enough for NTC to stop 24/7.

Smart's subsidiary, Piltel, also claimed its rehabilitation would suffer because of Sun's low rates. Piltel earned around P7 billion last year. Sun has been losing since it came into operation almost two years ago because it has been investing heavily in new cell sites to further improve its service.

Globe and Smart control 95 percent of the market and together earned around P72 billion in the past three years alone.

Japan's LDP backs RP on entertainers' visas

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

TOKYO—Members of Japan's dominant political party are supporting the Philippines' lobby against the new immigration policy setting stricter guidelines on the issuance of visas to Filipinos and other foreign entertainers as part of a clampdown on human trafficking.

But Philippine Ambassador Domingo Siazon Jr. said that Japan's new immigration policy was already a done deal and would take effect on March 15 as announced by Japan's justice ministry.

Japan's new immigration policy requires foreign entertainers intending to work in Japan to have two years of schooling or work experience outside Japan related to the performing arts.

Moratorium

Siazon, however, expressed confidence the new policy would not drastically reduce the 80,000 Filipina entertainers presently working in Japan.

The Philippine government through Siazon has formally asked the Japanese government for a five-year moratorium on the implementation of the new policy.

Koki Kobayashi, member of the powerful House of Representatives and senior leader of the Liberal Democratic Party, held a joint press conference with Commission on Filipinos Overseas chair Dante Ang on Thursday to strongly express his sentiment against the new policy.

Kobayashi denounced the policy as based on a "very biased" report of the United States placing Japan and the Philippines in the watchlist of countries engaged in human trafficking. "It's not objective, it's biased, groundless," Kobayashi told reporters through an interpreter.

Party caucus

Kobayashi is touted as a potential candidate for Prime Minister in the September 2006 elections, according to Ang. Kobayashi met with Ang, Batangas Rep. Hermilando Mandanas Jr. and lawyer Romulo Macalintal at the Capitol Tokyu Hotel here.

Yesterday, Kobayashi called a party caucus of the LDP in its headquarters to come up with a party position against the policy. Two major associations of Japanese promoters—Rengokai and Zengerein, are also protesting the new guidelines.

Kobayashi cited the significant contribution of the 80,000 Filipina entertainers in Japan to the Philippine economy and and to the Japanese entertainment industry. Filipinas account for 60 percent of the 130,000 foreign entertainers in Japan.

"As a member of the LDP and Congress, I will talk to my colleagues and members of the (House) committees to raise awareness (on the issue)," Kobayashi pledged.

He said that while the Japanese government was determined to implement the guidelines, he and other LDP members would try to reverse the policy.

Most unfair

In the press conference, Ang said the Philippine government would respect whatever decision the Japanese would make on the entertainment visas.

"However, we honestly think that the policy including the Philippines as among the countries violating human trafficking is most unfair," Ang said.

He said the International Labor Organization office in Japan reported that there were only 27 cases of Filipinas reported as victims of human trafficking from 1997 to 2002, with no case at all reported by the Japanese police in 2003.

Ang said the Philippine government is committed to combat human trafficking and prevent Filipina entertainers from falling prey to prostitution. But he said the Japanese government and promoters should also do their part in curbing human trafficking and prostitution.

Siazon told reporters that the Japanese government has agreed not to implement the new policy retroactively. It means those who applied by March 14 would be processed based on the old guidelines which allow a certification from the Philippine government agencies as sufficient requirement for the issuance of an entertainment visa.

Ang admitted that the policy would affect the Philippine economy because the 80,000 Filipina entertainers send as much as $1 billion in remittance annually and generate another $1 billion for the Philippine economy through the "downstream industry" such as travel agencies.

The United Organization of Overseas Artist Agencies of Japan (Rengokai) and the Association of All Japanese Promoters Recruiting Foreign Entertainers (Zengeiren), which employ about 90 percent of the 80,000 Filipina entertainers working in 5,000 clubs here, invited Ang's group to make a last-ditch joint lobby with members of the Japanese Diet and the government to reconsider the implementation of the new policy by March 15.

2-year rule

Under Japan's amended Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act, an entertainment visa can be issued only to an applicant who has spent a minimum of two years at a foreign educational institution studying subjects relevant to the type of performance he or she is applying for or a two-year work experience outside Japan.

Ang said the two-year schooling means that Filipino entertainers wanting to go to Japan have to take an arts degree in universities, a tough requirement on entertainers who often come from poor families.

Previously, only a certification by a foreign national or local government agency, such as the Artist Record Book or its replacement—the new Artist Accreditation Certificate issued by the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, was a requirement for securing an entertainment visa.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, February 19, 2005
1st Week of Lent

1st Reading:	**Dt 26:16-19**
Gospel:	**Mt 5:43-48**

Jesus said to his disciples, "You have heard that it was said: Love your neighbor and do not do good to your enemy. But this I tell you: Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in Heaven. For he makes his sun rise on both the wicked and the good, and he gives rain to both the just and the unjust.

"If you love those who love you, what is special about that? Do not even tax collectors do as much? And if you are friendly only to your friends, what is so exceptional about that? Do not even the pagans do as much? For your part you shall be righteous and perfect in the way your heavenly Father is righteous and perfect."

Commentary

We are exhorted like our ancestors in the desert to obey and put into practice God's commandments with all our hearts and souls and listen to his voice only. We are God's own people and we are to give him glory because he has set us apart from the nations, and consecrated us to him. We belong with Jesus to our Father and we are to obey the fulfillment of these commands: we are to love our enemies and do good and pray for those who persecute us if we are the children of God. God lets his rain fall and the sun to shine on all of us: just and unjust and we are to learn the compassion and righteous behavior of our God towards each other—towards all others. O God our Father, rain down your grace and strength upon us so that we might obey with all our hearts and souls, as your Church in the world. Make us love our enemies and remember that we belong to You alone and no nation must be obeyed if it tells us to kill. You have said we must love our enemies and that means to begin with: we cannot kill them. Make us your children and hold us fast, O Father of all. Amen.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

LABOR LAW (LABOR RELATIONS LAW)—Abandonment—For abandonment to exist, it is essential (1) that the employee must have failed to report for work or must have been absent without valid or justifiable reason; and (2) that there must have been a clear intention to sever the employer-employee relationship manifested by some overt acts. Both these requisites are not present here. There was no abandonment as the latter is not compatible with constructive dismissal. It is no less than the Constitution which guarantees protection to the workers' security of tenure as a policy of the State. This guarantee is an act of social justice. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Chico-Nazario, Second Division, Philippine American Life and General Insurance Co. vs Gramaje, G. R. No. 156963, November 11, 2004]

By R. B. Vera

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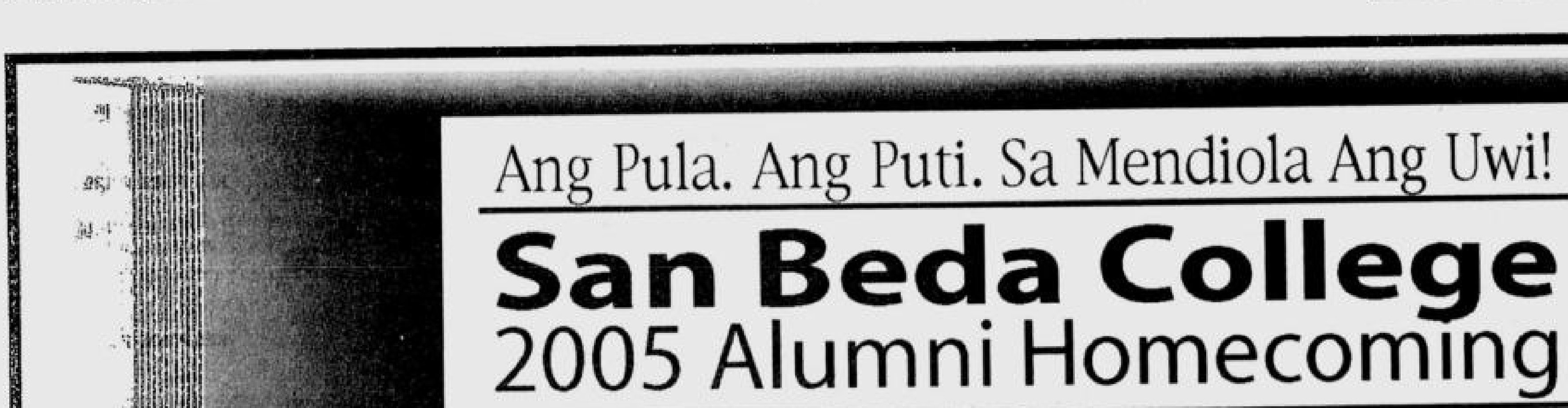

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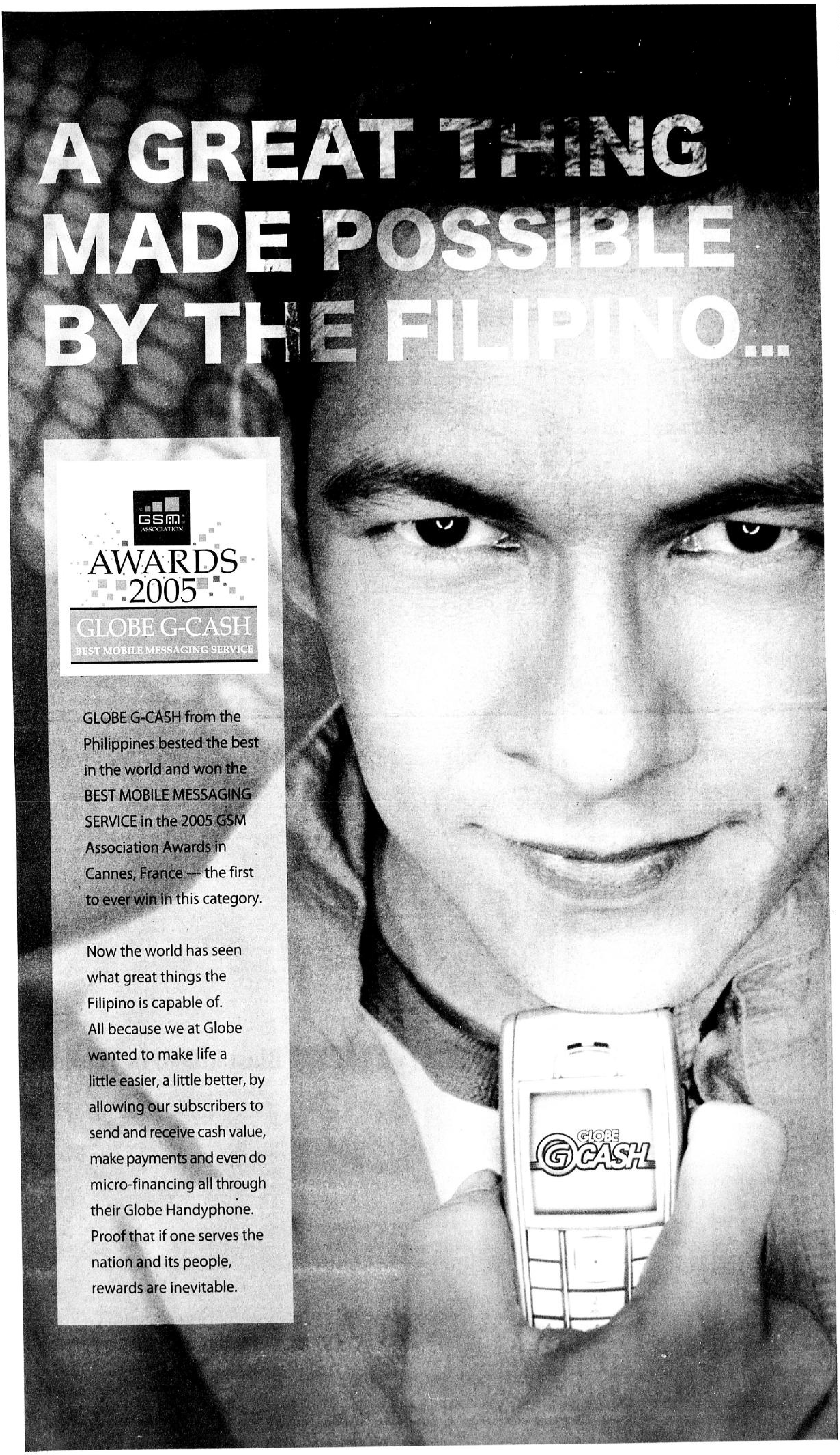

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Bush demands Syria leave Lebanon

By Steve Holland

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush on Thursday demanded Syria pull troops from Lebanon in the wake of the killing of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri and said he would seek support from European leaders next week to put more pressure on Damascus.

"Syria is out of step with the progress being made in the greater Middle East," Bush told a news conference.

He said it was too early to conclude that Syria had a role in killing Hariri. "I don't know yet, because the investigation is ongoing."

Bush's national security adviser, Stephen Hadley, said the United States objected to Russian plans to sell advanced surface-to-air missiles to Syria.

"We have some concerns and we've raised them with the Russian government... and we're hopeful and confident the Russians will take them into account," Hadley told reporters.

The bomb blast that killed Hariri came at a sensitive time for US policy in the Middle East, as Washington tries to steer Iraq toward democracy and to seal a peace agreement between Israel and the Palestinians.

Washington has used outrage prompted by the assassination of Hariri to intensify pressure it was already bringing on Damascus to withdraw from Lebanon.

Bush said he expected Syria to adhere to last September's UN Security Council resolution 1559, which calls for the removal of the Syrian troops, adding Damascus must promote free and fair elections in Lebanon.

Hariri was killed on Monday and many Lebanese immediately blamed Syria, which maintains a sizeable military and security presences in their country. Damascus denies any involvement, but the event has contributed to a rapid deterioration in US relations with Syria, with Bush summoning the US ambassador for urgent consultations.

Bush goes to Brussels next week to meet European Union and Nato leaders. He said he would use the meetings to rally pressure against Damascus.

"I look forward to working with my European friends on my upcoming trip to talk about how we can work together to convince the Syrians to make rational decisions," he said.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice said the administration believed it had the diplomatic tools to try to force Syria to leave Lebanon but noted Bush never took options off the table—code for not ruling out the possibility, however remote, of military action. *Reuters*

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More proof of US prisoner abuse in Afghanistan, Iraq, British newspaper says

LONDON—US military forces in Afghanistan engaged in "widespread Abu Ghraib-style abuse" of detainees, then sought to cover up their wrongdoing, a British newspaper alleged Friday.

The Guardian said it had seen 1,000 pages of evidence from US army investigations in Afghanistan and in Iraq, which were released to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) "after a long legal battle."

It said the evidence pointed to prisoner abuse at the main detention center at Bagram, near Kabul, and at a smaller US installation near the southern Afghan city of Kandahar.

"Photographs taken in southern Afghanistan showing US soldiers from the 22nd Infantry Battalion posing in mock executions of blindfolded and bound detainees, were purposely destroyed after the Abu Ghraib scandal to avoid 'another public outrage,' the documents show," the newspaper said.

Abu Ghraib, a detention center outside the Iraqi capital Baghdad, became notorious when photographs emerged last year depicting the abuse of Iraqi prisoners by their US captors.

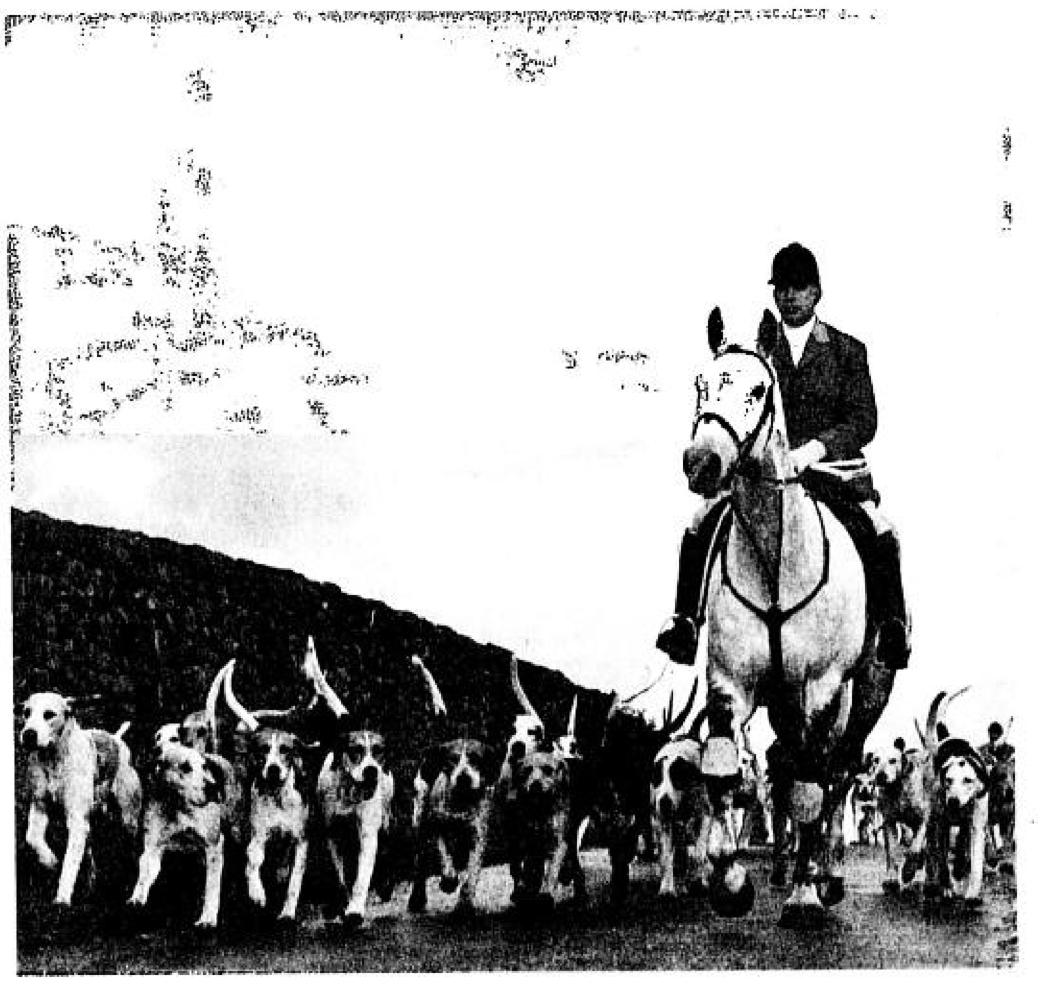
In Iraq, The Guardian quoted from a statement by an Iraqi who was held in Tikrit, the home region of deposed president Saddam Hussein, northwest of the capital.

It said he claimed that a trio of US interrogators in civilian clothes dislocated his arms, put an unloaded gun in his mouth and pulled the trigger, choked him with a rope, and beat him with a baseball bat.

"A medical examination by a US military doctor confirmed the detainee's account," yet an investigation into the case was closed in October last year, the newspaper said.

"It is further proof that the Army is not seriously investigating credible allegations of abuse," Jameel Jaffar, a lawyer for the ACLU, was quoted as saying.

Separately, The Guardian said that two former prisoners in Afghanistan—a Palestinian and a Jordanian—have made sworn affadavits after they were freed last year from detention in Afghanistan and Guantanamo Bay. *AFP*



THE HUNTMASTER of the South Notts fox hunt gathers his hounds before the hunt in Alderwasley in Derbyshire, central England, Feb. 17. Thousands of defiant British fox-hunting enthusiasts rode out on Thursday to enjoy their ancient pastime for one last time before the ban on hunting with dogs comes into force in England and Wales. REUTERS

Fox hunts banned in England, Wales

LONDON—A controversial ban on fox hunting and other forms of hunting with dogs came into force in England and Wales on Friday, with enthusiasts saying they were determined to pursue blood sports regardless.

The Countryside Alliance, which failed on Wednesday to get the Court of Appeal to declare the Hunting Act invalid, said 150 hunts were in action Thursday involving perhaps hundreds of thousands of hunters and supporters.

"It's a nonsense, the whole thing," Alliance spokesperson Tim Bonner said. "We intend to show that hunting will continue, we intend to beat this law one way or the other, we're not going away."

The Alliance expected up to 500,000 supporters to turn out to immediately defy the ban this weekend, he added.

The Hunting Act, which took effect at midnight, was the result of years of campaigning by those who regard fox hunting and other forms of hunting with hounds—a part of British country life for centuries—as cruel and inhumane.

Proposed by Prime Minister Tony Blair's government, the ban was adopted by the House of Commons last November after a rarely used law was pressed into service to override opposition in the unelected House of Lords.

Police forces have warned that the law, which follows a similar hunting ban in Scotland, could prove difficult, if not impossible, to enforce.

Hunt supporters say it will be unrealistic to expect police to distinguish between lawful drag hunts, those in which dogs merely chase the scent of a fox or other animal, and illegal hunts.

However, the League Against Cruel Sports, one of several groups that pushed hard for a ban, said its members would pursue hunting groups this weekend with video cameras to collect evidence that could be passed on to prosecutors.

The government also had stern words for would-be lawbreakers, with Rural Affairs Minister Alun Michael telling hunters they "do not have the right to flout a law that has been passed lawfully by a large majority of democratically elected members of Parliament."

"The hunting community have always said they are law-abiding members of the community and I expect them to keep to their word," Michael said. *AFP*

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Blast kills 6 in Thailand

SUNGAI KOLOK, Thailand—The first car bomb to explode in a year-long separatist uprising in Thailand's Muslim south was planted by relatives of hunted militant leaders, Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra said on Friday.

"We know it was done by children of people subject to our arrest warrants who are pressing the government to stop hunting them, not foreigners or any people linked to foreign groups," Thaksin told reporters in Bangkok.

Thursday night's blast killed six people and wounded more than a dozen in Sungai Kolok, a town close to the Malaysian border.

Gen. Sonthi Boonyakarin, a top army commander in the region, said the Barisan Revolusi Nasional, or National Revolution Front, a group fighting the government, was responsible for the blast.

He gave no other details, but told reporters the Army had detained a Thai Muslim man near the scene of the attack, heading for the nearby border in a stolen car.

But the governor of Narathiwat province, scene of one of the deadliest attacks since the uprising began in January 2004, said he was not so sure there was no foreign involvement.

The attack on Sungai Kolok, a border town that draws tourists with its bars and brothels, was too wicked for Thais to have carried out, Governor Pracha Taerat said.

"If they were Thai, they would not have planted such a powerful bomb as this, which is similar to those in Iraq," he said.

There has been considerable speculation that Jemaah Islamiyah, the Southeast Asian branch of al-Qaida, may be involved in the violence that has claimed almost 600 lives in the region.

Militants have let off several motorcycle bombs, triggered by mobile telephone, but security officials said a car bomb was a step up in sophistication.

The car, stolen from an army camp two years ago, was parked near a busy hotel hosting a wedding party. The fertilizer bomb inside it, weighing at least 50 kg, wrecked cars, shattered windows and damaged shops over a wide area.

"They aimed for a wider scale of victims. It is an act of terrorism," Pracha said.

Thaksin said that the effects of the bomb were magnified by its placement near power poles and a shop with gas canisters. *Reuters*

Oceans, Arctic studies show global warming is real

By Maggie Fox

WASHINGTON—A parcel of studies looking at the oceans and melting Arctic ice leave no room for doubt that it is getting warmer, people are to blame, and the weather is going to suffer, climate experts said on Thursday.

New computer models that look at ocean temperatures instead of the atmosphere show the clearest signal yet that global warming is well underway, said Tim Barnett of the Scripps Institution of Oceanography.

Speaking at an annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Barnett said climate models based on air temperatures are weak because most of the evidence for global warming is not even there.

"The real place to look is in the ocean," Barnett told a news conference.

His team used millions of temperature readings made by the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to calculate steady ocean warming.

"The debate over whether or not there is a global warming signal is now over, at least for rational people," he said.

The report was published one day after the United Nations Kyoto Protocol took effect, a 141-nation environmental pact the United States government has spurned for several reasons, including stated doubts about whether global warming is occurring and is caused by people.

Barnett urged US officials to reconsider.

"Could a climate system simply do this on its own? The answer is clearly no," Barnett said.

His team used US government models of solar warming and volcanic warming, just to see if they could account for the measurements they made. "Not a chance," he said.

And the effects will be felt far and wide. "Anywhere that the major water source is fed by snow... or glacial melt," he said. "The debate is what are we going to do about it."

Other researchers found clear effects on climate and animals.

Ruth Curry of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution found that melting ice was changing the water cycle, which in turn affects ocean currents and, ultimately, climate.

"As the Earth warms, its water cycle is changing, being pushed out of kilter," she said. "Ice is in decline everywhere on the planet."

A circulation system called the Ocean Conveyer Belt is in danger of shutting down, she said. The last time that happened, northern Europe suffered extremely cold winters.

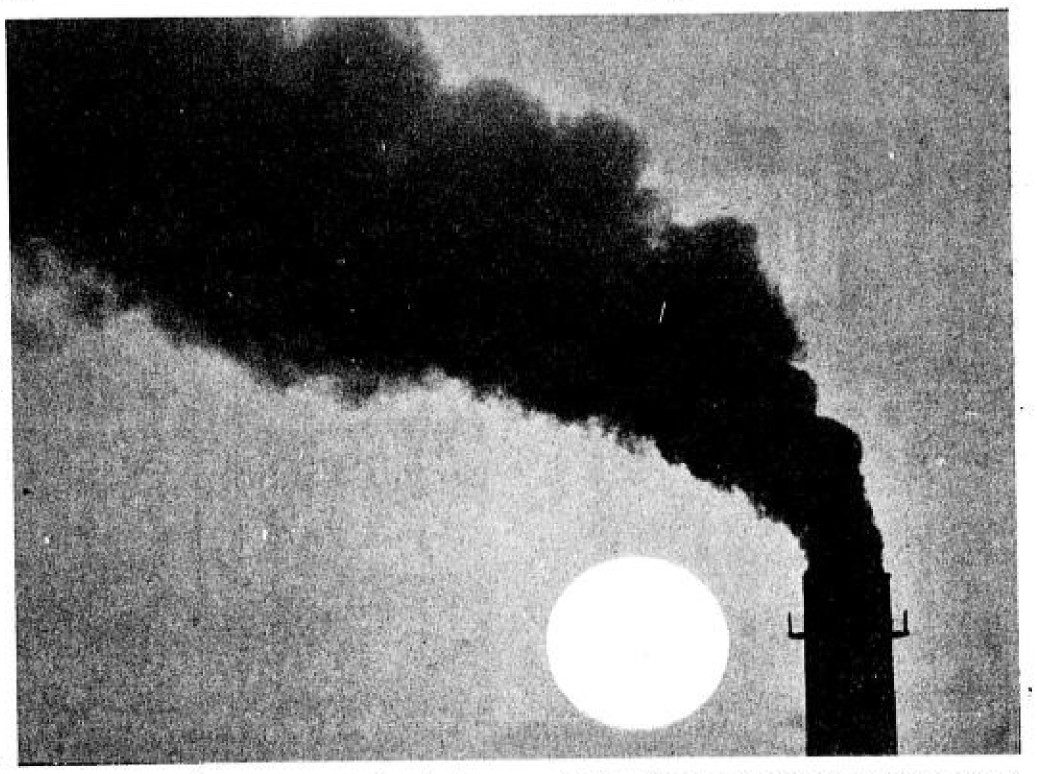
She said the changes were already causing droughts in the US West.

Greenland's ice cap, which contains enough ice to raise sea levels globally by 7 meters, is starting to melt and could collapse suddenly, Curry said. Already freshwater is percolating down, lubricating the base and making it more unstable.

Sharon Smith of the University of Miami found melting Arctic ice was taking with it algae that formed an important base of the food supply for a range of animals.

And the disappearing ice shelves meant big animals such as walruses, polar bears and seals were losing their homes.

"In 1997 there was a mass die-off of a bird called the short-tailed shearwater in the Bering Sea," Smith told the news conference. *Reuters*



SMOKE billows from a power station during sunset in New Delhi Feb. 16. The Kyoto Protocol, a world plan to fight global warming, went into force on Wednesday, feted by its backers as a lifeline for the planet amid sniping at the United States for staying out. REUTERS

Charles, Camilla marry on April 8

LONDON—Prince Charles will marry Camilla Parker Bowles in a civil ceremony in Windsor Town Hall on April 8 instead of Windsor Castle because of difficulties over the license, his office said on Thursday.

Clarence House said the move would at least make the wedding more accessible to the public.

"Having the civil ceremony in Windsor Castle would have entailed closing... rooms that are now open to the public," a spokesperson said. "It will also make the occasion more public because the Guildhall is in the town."

The royal castle does not have a license to hold civil marriage ceremonies, and one of the conditions for granting it is that the rooms will be used for such ceremonies regularly.

Instead, the ceremony will be held in the town's 17th century Guildhall, the town hall, followed by a blessing by Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams in St. George's Chapel inside the Castle grounds.

Parker Bowles has an uphill struggle to escape the shadow of the prince's ex-wife, Princess Diana, killed in a Paris car crash in 1997.

By the time she died she and the heir to the throne had already had a messy separation and divorce.

Charles has since gradually risen in public esteem—mainly from the way he has looked after his sons William and Harry.

He and Parker Bowles unexpectedly announced last week their intention to marry, sparking a media frenzy, but stressing that she will not be addressed as queen when Charles becomes king. *AP*

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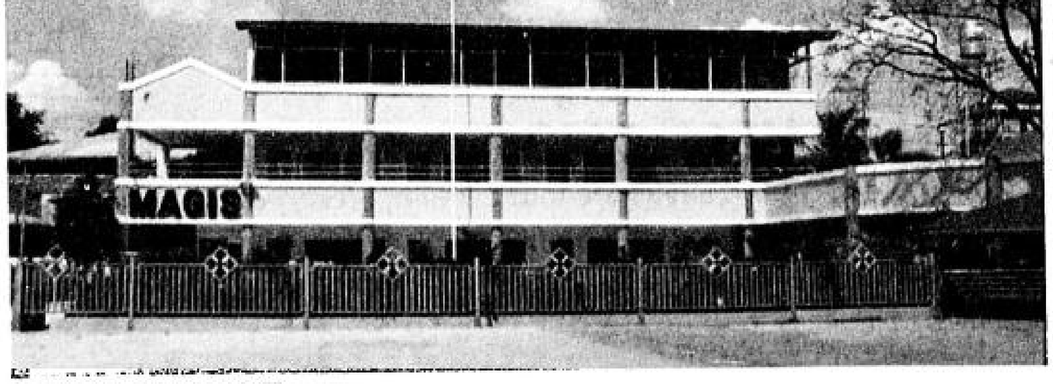

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OPINION

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Overkill alert

EDITORIAL

THE VALENTINE'S Day bombings have resulted in a chorus of protests against terrorism. They have achieved what their perpetrators did not expect: a rousing call against extremism and its pretensions. They have consolidated the consensus among peace-loving people that terrorism is malice masquerading as political conviction. Malevolence has a face, and it is the face of the Valentine bombers.

But government risks melding with the face of the malefactors of malevolence when it over-reacts. It has not achieved that dubious distinction yet. But its propensity for shotgun investigations—"blame everyone first before an honest-to-goodness inquiry"—prefigures that.

It is easy to blame, for example, the so-called renegade faction of the Moro National Liberation Front which attacked several military outposts in Basilan last week, killing several soldiers, generally amounting to a fly in the ointment in the run-up to the resumption of talks between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. (The MILF is the original MNLF breakaway faction that has somehow gotten the upper hand in claiming the position of spokesman for the Muslim secessionist movement in Mindanao.) It is likewise easy to blame the Abu Sayyaf and its allies in the Jemaah Islamiyah. After all, the Abu Sayyaf and the JI have been behind some of the more notorious terrorist attacks in the last several years. And didn't Abu Solayman, the self-styled Abu Sayyaf spokesman, claim on radio responsibility for the bombings?

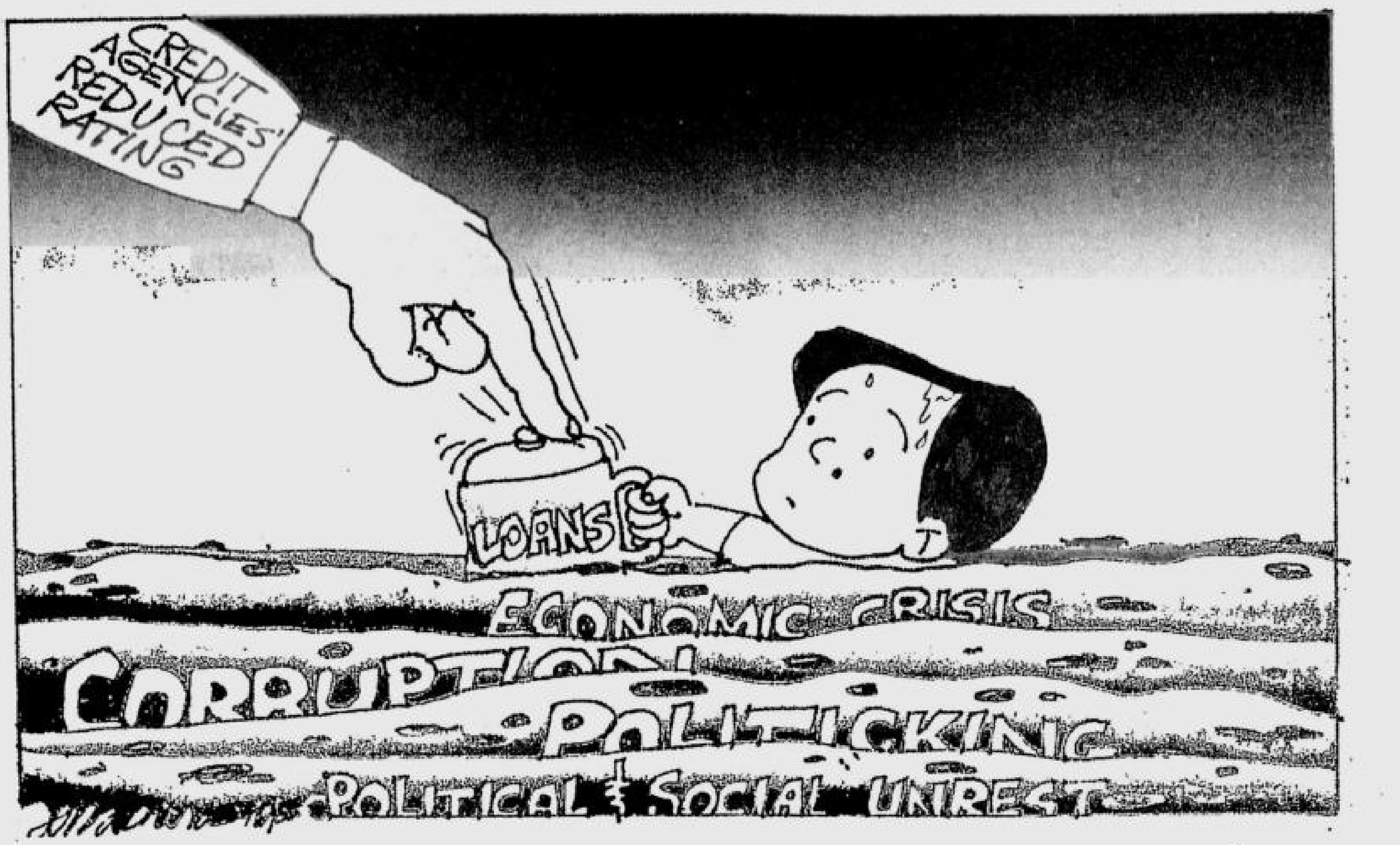
What is surprising is that government and the military have not been too casual in assigning blame to the extremists or the secessionist groups. This may be so because it had written off these groups a long time ago. The bombings could have been so calculated as to constitute a slap in the face of a government that might have spoken too soon, who knows? If so, then one could only imagine government's shock.

The worse shock, of course, is that the government had been caught flat-footed. Despite billions of pesos in intelligence funds, the military failed to prevent the bombings or anticipate the boldness of their design and execution. This country has the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency that does not seem to coordinate all the disparate and often wrangling intelligence agencies, whether in military or civilian offices. The well-coordinated bombings last Monday should show who has a better sense of coordination.

Since the government would assign the blame neither on itself or its enemies (because it has long written them off and to name them would conjure them back from the tomb where the state authorities have consigned them in what now amounts to a virtual, and hence, spurious, burial), then it is most likely it would pin the blame on the most convenient scapegoats: the Muslim population. Already several imams and heads of Muslim communities have sounded the alarm that the bombings would merely lead to graver and more intense persecution of Muslims whose only sin is to have the same religion as the extremists. It seems to have been made a standard in the military and police rules of engagement that the first step in a post-bombing scenario is a dragnet of Muslims. Many people have been the victims of summary arrests only because they pray to Allah.

The government and the military should not take lightly its often knee-jerk reactions to bombings. The reaction is nearly always wholesale anti-Muslim persecution. And this is by no means merely local. Even foreigners have felt prejudiced by summary and strong-arm tactics that do not discern and distinguish. Many Middle-Eastern investors and businessmen, for example, have left the Philippines. Even Indians, who are mostly Hindus, have complained that they are being harassed by law enforcers just because they look like people from the Middle East. These foreigners are good investors and hardworking, disciplined and peace-loving. Some of them have intermarried with Filipinos and have considered the Philippines their new home. They have never failed in condemning terrorism, but overreacting law enforcers are making their lives hell.

In the wake of the Valentine's Day attacks, there has been an unprecedented public condemnation of terrorism and support for government initiatives to deal with the extremists decisively. But the decisiveness should be characterized by intelligence and discernment. The call to action is clear: government should respond to terrorism firmly, and it can only do so by not creating more enemies.



Fake medicines

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

MEDICINES are essential to the maintenance of health and the survival of life in any society, from the earliest tribal units to the present-day sophisticated communities. Drugs have especially become necessary in the modern world with the intrusion of new and fatal afflictions for which, like the common cold, advances in science have yet to find a cure.

People who consider themselves healthy agree that medicines are a necessity but fortunately not for them. It is a fact of life that does not directly affect them and so does not cause them needless worry. It is only when their muscles begin to ache or their bones start to creak, or their hearts miss a beat or two, or they feel dizzy after a heavy meal, that they accept the mortality of their existence. That is when they decide to think of doctors and, of course, medicines.

Television and radio commercials have dinned on their audience the importance and superior qualities of the cures they are advertising. These come-ons have at least made us health-conscious, which is a virtue that should be encouraged and developed. Many people have abandoned the superstitious practices and ineffectual nostrums they used to depend on when they got sick. They now rely instead on modern well-researched remedies for the alleviation of their ailments.

The problem, however, is that some of these government-approved medicines are, because of their efficacy, being faked by unscrupulous businesses to the prejudice of credulous patients. The lower price of these counterfeit drugs makes them attractive to unsuspecting buyers who are always looking for a bargain, particularly during these cash-strapped times. Little do they realize that this false economy may have an adverse and sometimes even fatal impact upon their health.

Counterfeit medicines are defined as those stealthily manufactured by unscrupulous persons to imitate and compete with genuine medicines duly tested and approved by the government. According to Pfizer, one of the leading drug companies in the country, such fakes may include products labeled to look like the genuine medicines but do not contain the correct kind and amount of ingredients, or may have expired, or may have been illicitly relabeled, each of which offenses may cause the risk of allergy or dangerous interaction with other medicines.

Pfizer deplores the difficulty of telling "the difference between real and fake medicines because counterfeit medicines are copied to make them look like the original. Thinking that these medicines can be trusted, patients, doctors and other medical practitioners often do not even suspect that there is anything wrong with the pills and tablets they use" that may expose themselves to possible harmful effects.

An unregistered imported medicine is also considered counterfeit if there is a counterpart registered branded or generic medicine approved by the Bureau of Food and Drugs. Consumers should carefully examine the packaging and labeling of the medicines they buy and be suspicious if this is done with cheap materials or if the medicine does not have a generic name.

"Nearly all medicines are being counterfeited," the drug company adds. "These include familiar everyday medicines like vitamins as well as life-saving ones like antibiotics and anti-hypersensitives." The World Health Organization estimates that the circulation of fake drugs constitutes 6 percent of the world market. Our Department of Health says that 10 percent of medicines in the Philippines are counterfeit.

Realizing the need to combat this serious threat to the health of our people, the Coalition Against Fake Medicines was launched recently under the leadership of the Department of Health as the primary regulatory agency in charge of medicines. It will be supported by the Department of Trade and Industry, which will receive consumer complaints and cancel the licenses of businesses found to be producing or selling the prohibited products. The Department of Justice, also a principal partner, will undertake the prosecution of all persons or companies suspected of the offense.

The private members of the Coalition are the Philippine Medical Association, the Philippine Daily Inquirer, the GMA-7 Broadcast Network, Mercury Drug Corporation, the Drugstores Association of the Philippines, Zuellig Pharma Corporation, and Pfizer, which supplied the information for this article through its official publication, HealthLink. Each of these entities is assigned particular functions to make the campaign against pirated drugs a successful over-all effort to achieve its principal objective of protecting the nation's health.

The intended beneficiaries of the Coalition have a stake in its success and so should give it their wholehearted assistance. The willing involvement of the above-named private entities in the movement should give a praiseworthy example for the rest of the country to follow. Fake medicines can stunt the growth of our race and enfeeble the physical well-being of our people, especially the children. Let us not forfeit our future health with our indifference to the problem we should face today.

My kind of Filipinos

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

ONE of the noteworthy results of the Pulse Asia Survey conducted last November was that almost two-thirds (63 percent) of the respondents—where every Filipino had an equal chance to be selected—disagreed with the statement, "This country is hopeless," with 20 percent undecided and only a relatively small minority (16 percent) agreeing. A significantly smaller proportion, but still a majority (54 percent), also disagreed with the statement, "If it were only possible, I would migrate to another country and live there," with 18 percent undecided, and a larger minority (28 percent) agreeing.

Those statistics need a human face, and this column is devoted to Chris and Marivic Bernido, who are exemplars of this majority and whose actions show how deeply they love their country and how much they are willing to do to make it a better place to live in.

Chris and Marivic are not your average Filipino couple. Both have PhDs in Theoretical Physics (State University of New York, Albany) and have distinguished themselves in the field, in the Philippines and abroad, with an international reputation in Path Integrals Method and White Noise Analysis (don't ask me what these are, but they sound impressive). Their names appear as authors or co-authors in the Journal of Mathematical Physics and other international journals. Both were in the faculty (Chris was director) of the National Institute of Physics, University of the Philippines, and both earned "Outstanding Teacher" awards when they resigned in 1999.

It is easy to jump to the conclusion that they left UP for greener pastures abroad. With their qualifications, they could work practically anywhere in the developed world, at salaries at least 10 times the local rates. But if that was what happened, this story would have been about two more Filipinos who joined the brain drain.

Money was not their object. They went back to Jagna, Bohol, (population 30,000) to set up the Central Visayas Institute Foundation with two seemingly disparate arms: the Research Center for Theoretical Physics (RCTP), serving Visayas and Mindanao, and the Central Visayas Institute Foundation (CVIF) high school, originally set up 30 years before by Chris' grandfather, which was floundering. Their primary aim was investment in human capital, more precisely human capital development. It was payback time—to the country they love.

That the RCTP is flourishing should be no surprise, given the backgrounds of the founders. It regularly conducts seminars and workshops for the transfer of technology and knowledge. It helps institutions of higher learning in Visayas and Mindanao improve their research and teaching capabilities, as well as their academic programs, and hosts triennial international conferences which have attracted some of the best physicists in the world, including Nobel laureates. The Bernidos receive no help from the Philippine government for these efforts.

But if the Bernidos' work in RCTP serves as a beacon for physics research and training, their work in CVIF is making waves in the Philippine education circles. The school has been visited by educators from all over the country (the most recent being the consortium of Poveda, De La Salle and Immaculate Conception Academy), and the Bernidos have been invited to expound on what they are doing under the sponsorship of the Fund for Assistance to Private Education.

Why? Because in the course of four years of school administration (principal, director), teaching (General Science, Chemistry, Physics, Geometry) and by firsthand experience, they realized that the traditional teaching methods developed in the West were not effective in the current Philippine context. So they worked out a program called the CVIF Dynamic Learning Program (CVIF Program, for short) which is suitable for the large classes common in the Philippines, requires a smaller number of textbooks, needs fewer science equipment, reduces teaching personnel requirements, is less dependent on the abilities and personalities of teachers, has built-in checks of dysfunctional behavior observed in Filipinos (which they list as: a culture of dependence, underdeveloped virtue of honesty, low standards of quality or the *pwede na 'yan* attitude, skewed priorities, and a poor concept of time and discipline in keeping schedules). In short, a program that addresses the problems and adverse conditions existing in the country.

And get this, folks: the students have no **homework** under the CVIF Program (I hope to write more about this in another column).

That the program is succeeding can be judged from what the Bernidos call external checks. First is that for the first time in their school's history, students passed the UP College Admission Test two years in a row: five (out of 12 who took it) in 2003, and four in 2002 (after eight years without any passers). Second is that in the Mathematical Challenge for Filipino Kids Training Program conducted by the Mathematics Trainers Guild (MTG) of the Philippines, the number of CVIF qualifiers rose from one to eight to 10 since 2002—with two of them ranking second and third overall, outranking their counterparts from Tagbilaran City.

How's that performance for a rural high school where almost half of the students had a parent or guardian who did not get past high school? Chris and Marivic dream of some of those students eventually feeding into the Research Center for Theoretical Physics. And they are working hard to realize that dream.

They are my kind of Filipinos.

Putting on a brave face

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

MALACAÑANG has sought to differentiate between the Cabinet members who have to divest themselves of their personal holdings in private firms before they can occupy their posts and those serving pro bono in an advisory capacity. It said that the latter don't have to give up their work in private corporations and ruled out a conflict of interest in their situation. This clarification was deemed necessary by the Palace after former Solicitor General Francisco Chavez questioned before the Ombudsman former Foreign Secretary and business executive Roberto Romulo's keeping the post of presidential adviser for international competitiveness.

* * *

Romulo himself has defended his advisory post, which carries no salary and "formal office," by stressing "the long tradition and practice in various presidencies here of tapping personages from the private sector and civil society to serve as non-salaried advisers and members of presidential councils and task forces." He also noted the "useful distinction" under RP laws, between "public officers" and "advisers," e.g., the former can sign legal documents on behalf of government, while the latter cannot.

Indeed, one recalls the appointment of distinguished business leaders like Washington Sycip and Alfonso Yuchengco to various honorific roles in government, including President Macapagal-Arroyo's International Board of Advisers. Apparently the idea of various presidents, including Fidel Ramos, has been to avail of the advice and experience of these prominent business leaders without paying for it. In the first place, considering their status, hiring them formally would be beyond the government's capacity to pay. In the second place, they doubtless wouldn't think of leaving their private jobs, so they merely serve government pro bono. This arrangement has worked in past administrations, and there is no reason it cannot in this one.

* * *

Senators Joker Arroyo and Aquilino Pimentel have advised the country's financial managers to "ignore" the recent two-notch downgrade by Moody's Investor's Service and pretend this and other credit-rating agencies that have downgraded RP's credit rating do not exist. That's easier said than done. Obviously the two senators are just trying to make their chamber put on a brave face. The fact is, as this column warned some weeks back and as the UP School of Economics, notably the feisty Solita Monsod, recently said, the senators are to blame for this downgrade. For they took so long to pass the critical revenue measures intended to help put our fiscal house in order.

* * *

This space has time and again decried the Senate's lack of urgency in addressing the fiscal problem. Like the people in the bus before the terrorists struck, our senators seem to delude themselves that a downgrade won't happen to this country. But it happened, with Moody's giving the country a worse rating than Standard & Poor's.

The Cabinet's economic team is crying "ouch" over Moody's "undeserved severity" even as it touts the response of the business community which seems to be taking it quite well, with the peso bouncing back and the stock market remaining bullish. But as Rep. Joey Salceda, the resident economist of the House, pointed out, the downgrade's effects will be felt when the country pays at least P62 billion more in interest this year.

* * *

The INQUIRER editorial said it well: the advice of Arroyo and Pimentel is "worse than inconsistent. It is perilous." For the fact is that the credit-rating agencies (such as Fitch, Standard and Poor's, Moody's Investors and the Japan Rating & Investment Information Inc.) "do exist," as the editorial said, and both borrowers and lenders use them as independent, third-party agencies to assess a borrower's credit-worthiness—whether it can pay its loans with a minimum of risk or not. As Sen. Mar Roxas put it, we should take the downgrade seriously "because the people we borrow from listen to the credit-rating agencies." Because of its poor revenue collection, the government is particularly vulnerable to credit-rating agencies because it has to borrow about $3 billion yearly abroad.

* * *

We are all trying to put on a brave face, but let's not kid ourselves. The domino effect of the series of downgrades, including Japan Rating's moving us from a stable outlook to negative, is akin to a bad reputation which can travel faster than lightning in the international business community. The sad thing is that it could have been avoided had our executive and legislative officials pulled together to present a picture of confidence and resolve to tackle the fiscal crisis. This was what those agencies were looking for.

But the nation must move on. The administration is correct in viewing the downgrading as a challenge to push for more economic and fiscal reforms. The first thing to do is to tighten our belt, push revenue collection and watch those government agencies that only know how to incur loans and more loans. Congress has to pass the revenue measures in order to provide government the funds to operate so it does not have to constantly run to foreign sources.

* * *

I agree with Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima: a multi-tiered or even a two-tiered VAT would be very difficult to implement and manage, and would only encourage more graft and corruption. If the 2 percent increase in VAT is truly anathema to our senators, who believe it would bring more hardships to our people, then let's stick to the old 10 percent rate, but let's abolish as many of the exemptions as possible. Certainly the doctors and lawyers who earn over P700,000 a year ought to pay VAT, as the Consumer & Oil Price Watch, led by its chair Raul Concepcion, is advocating. Let there be no more dilly-dallying in enacting that VAT bill.

Garden magic

HIGH BLOOD

Marcia E. Sandoval

WE'D also like to know the concerns of the sixtysomething and above, what makes their blood pressure rise or makes them sit back, content that all's well with their world and with themselves. —**Ed.**

IF there is anything that envelopes me with supreme passion, it is seeing a beautiful garden. Gardens are magical pieces of creativity that rap your awareness, then fill your soul. They are the Creator's hand touching us through nature. To have a garden, no matter how small, is earthly bliss.

What is it about the simplicity of gardening that gives joy? To marcot, to plant from seed, to transplant—all these give satisfaction beyond measure especially when the first roots germinate. The act of watering the plants itself is a meditation. Stress is flung to the winds in those quiet times when, in communion with nature, a deep feeling of exuberance wraps you and there is no doubt God is near you.

I am fortunate to have a 25-year-old garden. Sandy, my husband, started it for me. He personally planted the rows of narra trees when they were only a foot high. Now they are giants, forming an umbrella path, their branches intertwined one with the other.

There is a collection of banaba trees that add accent to the garden. We had bought them from an old *suki* in Calamba. We bought the whole lot and never regretted it. The flowers are like pink butterflies, fragile, endlessly blooming from September to January.

A perfumed garden in a quiet pocket made up of white flowers—camia, rosal, kampuput, malococo—all under the shade of ilang-ilang trees. A fountain of jasmines. Standing solitary on her own is a huge bush of an old-fashioned bridal bouquet, now rare. Sandy and I always agreed that in a previous life we must have been gardeners because the garden has always been our secret love.

Sandy had made, for kitchen use, an English herb garden. Herbs are as erratic as the weather. Some herbs disappear with the first rains, others thrive on rain: Italian oregano, Vietnam basil, tarragon—all growing so robust despite endless downpours.

To add whimsy to the surroundings, we built a pond to house a company of Koi carps, which gracefully swim, reminding us of ballerinas. The fattest and biggest of the lot we named Big Bertha. We constructed tall, sturdy arches in the main garden to fill with creepers. The jade vine is the prima donna of the lot. With her grape-like shape, her monochromatic chertruse colors makes onlookers gasp.

The rest of the vines are from Papua, New Guinea. An incandescent coral vine that glows in the dark is truly phenomenal. I give a dinner party each time they're in bloom and we put the tables under the vines, the better to show them off.

In my family, the women are known for their beautiful hands (*hugis kandila*). Mine are past tense. My fingers have to feel the soil, to dig through the fragrance of fertile black earth, to prune all the withered leaves, until the hands feel like sandpaper. It really does not matter. They have become strong working gardener's paws, and there lies the satisfaction.

Plants are special gifts. Every time I water the garden, I see familiar faces in plants gifted me. They are nice reminders of the exchange that plant lovers give each other. There, too, is a growing link in friendship and is usually attached with a sliver of love because only love can give you the happiness of putting life on a simple branch. Plant giving, to me, is an "I care" gift.

All perennial gardeners pass through plant collection binges. At the start, it was for me a madness for orchids, then bougainvilleas, callas, centennial hibiscus. Of late, I am back to starting on a collection of single-petal millennium hibiscus.

Garden magic starts from dawn to ebony nights. A refreshing "Good morning" is your wake-up call when the first ray of sun rattles the thousand leaves under its shadows. After breakfast, the garden asks for nourishment. Watering begins, after which the plants come abloom in thanksgiving. By sunset, there is a blush of orange tint around, a kiss from the setting sun.

The mystic full moon of each month does strange things to the garden. The trees sparkle, glitter, shine as if clad in jewels. The fireflies respond with winks here and there. A concert of crickets sing in unison, owls hoot, and then a solitary bird bursts into a night song.

Dwarfs and elves and lots of other little peoples rise from their mini-kingdom and pass you by on tiptoes. A flight of fairies whisper a soft prayer in your ear, and you hear it in your silence. The big, old *Kapre* is deep in his smoke atop the balete tree and gives side glances at the folks below.

A sudden peal of laughter breaks the silence of moonlight, giggles from children playing behind the bushes. The garden becomes enchanted, like a great masterpiece of a painting stroked by an ethereal artist. The night is shared with people who have touched our lives.

That is what the garden is all about: the sharing of joys and blessings given us in sunset years.

It is a benediction. The splendor of it all is bursting in the gardener's heart.

Besides tending to her garden, Marcia E. Sandoval at 73 paints and writes books for children. She has her home in Laguna.

Chabacano

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

MAYBE you have gotten tired of my Muslims (someone was complaining about all those names, although that's probably the way they sounded to Capt. Thomas Forrest 300 years ago). So for a change of pace, a friend downloaded some articles from the Net and e-mailed them to me. They deal with a language seldom heard these days, especially in Ermita where it has virtually disappeared. It is also spoken in Cavite and Zamboanga, but with the demographics taking place it may well be another piece of heritage that may not survive. It may surprise you to know (it did me) that it was spoken as well in Binondo, Paco and Trozo (where my maternal grandfather came from). The language is also found, it seems, in Davao and Cotabato and may even exist in Sabah! According to a 2000 census, a total of 210,000 people speak Caviteño and Ternateño.

Godofredo Samonte of Cavite City tells us that Chabacano came into existence when migrating Spaniards settled in Ternate, Cavite, Ermita in Manila and Zamboanga and married native women. In an effort to understand each other, Spaniards tried to learn Tagalog while the Filipinas mixed Tagalog with Spanish. Samonte states that Chabacano's origin was a mispronunciation of Spanish words as in *"Bini tu aqui"* which comes from *"Ven aqui"* or *"Vente aqui"* (Come here). The Spanish *"De donde vienes?"* (Where do you come from?) becomes in Caviteño or Ternateño *"Donde tu ya bini?"*

It is possible though that the Caviteños learned it from the Mardicas, 200 of whom were brought over from Ternate in the Moluccas and first settled in the Ermita for around 50 years. In 1700, they were relocated to Maragondon, Cavite facing Manila Bay where they christened their new home Ternate after their old homeland.

In 1641, the Spaniards established a shipbuilding yard in Cavite and in time this became an important naval base. It was from here that the city of Cavite developed and it is entirely possible that the Mardicas sought work in the naval yard thus propagating their language.

A very charming example of the metaphoric quality of Chabacano is this example: *"Ta sali ya el prusision"* sounds like it means the procession is leaving, but it means the rice in the pot is already boiling. Or *"Cumi uno buta dos"* referring to eating shell fish since you eat the meat and throw away the shell, "thus the expression, eat one and throw away two."

You also had a mixture of two languages as in *"Tu un daldalero"* from the Tagalog *daldal* ("talkative").

If Chabacano once was a mixture of Spanish and Tagalog, today American English has also been added as in *"Absent eli na lecture ayel."* Obviously "absent" and "lecture" are English, demonstrating that Chabacano is still a growing language, absorbing new words.

What you also might find intriguing are the prayers Samonte gives us in Oracion Chabacana. The Sign of the Cross is *El Señal del Sta. Cruz - Na nombre del Tata, y del Hijo, y del Espiritu Santo.* And Our Father is *El Reso del Señor* (literally The Lord's Prayer), which goes:

Niso Tata Qui ta na cielo:
Quida santificao Tu nombre;
Manda vini con niso Tu reino;
Sigui el qui quiere Tu aqui na tierra igual como na cielo! Dali con niso ahora, niso comida para todo el dia; Perdona el mga culpa di niso, si quilaya ta perdona niso con aquel mga qui tiene culpa con niso;
No dija qui cai niso na tentacion, pero salva con niso na malo.

Then we have the Hail Mary or *El Saludo del Angel con Maria* (The Angel's Greeting to Mary):

Ta saluda yo contigo,Maria,
quida alegre tu! Lleno tu di gracia! El Senor ta alli contigo! Bendito tu mas di todo el mga mujer,
y bendito rin tu Hijo Jesus!
Sta. Maria, Nana di Dios: Riza para niso, el mga qui tiene culpa, ahora y na hora di niso muerte.
El Gloria con el Santisima Trinidad -
Gloria con El Tata, y con el Hijo, y con el Espiritu Santo.
Igual como na principio,
ansina ahora y para todo El tiempo.

Finally here are Spanish words that have been adopted into Tagalog or Chabacano but whose meanings have changed:

Ya (Chavacano) denotes past tense. (In Spanish, *ya* means "already.") *"Donde andas?"* (Chavacano) means "Where are you going?" (In Spanish, *anda* means "to walk or operate.") *Siguro* means "maybe." (In Spanish *seguro* means "sure, secure, stable.") *Syempre* means "of course." (The Spanish *siempre* means "always.") *Pirmi* (Tagalog, Visayan, Chavacano) means "always." (The Spanish *firme* means "firm, steady.") *Basta* means "as long as." (In Spanish *basta* means "enough.") *Maske/maski* means "even if." (The Spanish *mas que* means "more than.") *Kubeta* means "toilet/outhouse." (The Spanish *cubeta* means "bucket.") *Casilyas* (Visayan, Chavacano) means "toilet/toilet seat/to shit." (The Spanish *casillas* means "chess squares, hut, cabin.") *Lamierda/lamyerda* means "paint the town red." (The Spanish *la mierda* means "shit, excrement.") *Puto* means "a rice cake." (The Spanish *puto* means "a male prostitute.") *Baho* means "pungent or smelly." (The Spanish *bajo* means "descend, below.") *Sabi* means "to say." (The Spanish *saber* means "to know.") *Barkada* means "group or friends." (The Spanish *barcada* means "boatload.") *Sugal* means "gambling." (The Spanish *jugar* means "to play"). *Mamon* means "fluffy bread." (The Spanish *mamon* means "a woman's large breast.") *Pera* means "money." (The Spanish *perra* means "silver coin.")

Pit stop

YOUNG BLOOD

Diomar Lomboy

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

FOUR years ago on the first day of school, we were asked to talk about ourselves in front of a noisy class. I declared boastfully that "I would like to become the greatest president this country ever had." Suddenly all eyes and ears were on me, their *chismis* sessions halted as eyebrows were raised.

Yes, you read it right. I would like to become the president of the Philippines 20 years hence. I'm not kidding. The statement that I intended as a joke four years ago is now my ambition (or should I say, illusion?). I myself am wondering why am I getting serious about this unusual matter. But hey, the best things in life, like dreaming, are free. Dreaming is believing and all that stuff.

How close am I to reaching this outrageous and illustrious dream? Hmmm, I must have moved about a meter in a journey of a thousand light years to a distant star.

When I finished college, I thought I had only retired from 16 years of academic life. Well, I did and moved a little bit more. I was promoted from being a homebody to a houseboy. That may be an exaggeration of my present condition, but I guess the word is far nicer than the other terms, *tambay* and *palamunin* (which I am not).

Almost a year after graduation, I am stuck in this noble career. The first three months I spent preparing myself for job hunting. I took the civil service exam last April, got my transcript and diploma in May and worked on other important documents such as clearances, certificates and even a passport the following month. Indeed those days were my grand vacation after several days of working to produce our thesis and cramming for our final exams.

When I got fed up waiting for a reply to my job application in South Korea (yup I joined the bandwagon for fun), I resolved to settle for a less fulfilling job.

I was hired as a merchandiser, a.k.a candy man, and paid the minimum wage. My daily task was to manage the stocks of my assigned importer, a distributor of sweets. My job was terribly challenging. I had to make sure that my 31 display areas were free of dust, put shelf tags and tag prices and display products attractively.

I enjoyed the job for a time, but I soon got tired of the monotonous and boring life I was having. I also got pissed with the tyranny of my boss. When a seemingly better opportunity came along, I quit, little knowing that I was jumping out of the frying pan into the fire.

I was sort of brainwashed when I was given an orientation about my new job as a marketing assistant. The perks and privileges were considerable. I was on probationary status for only a month. I was given a laptop to use with Internet access and an office. I was promised a bonus if the business prospered.

I was contented during my first week of work. I wrote market proposals and advertisements, telemarketed calling cards, personally sold the products and services provided by the store and did other assignments given by my boss.

But my second week was truly tiring. I was sent to peddle our wares 24/7. My boss became capricious and unappreciative of my efforts, and started to hurl invectives at me. I quickly realized that I was underpaid, overworked and overberated. So before I turned into a zombie, I quit.

So here I am again enjoying my bumming days like I did last summer. I am now a houseboy in my own house. I do the laundry, clean the whole house, baby-sit my naughty little brother, cook and do other things ordered by my immediate boss (my mother). I get a lot of things done and I am enjoying it. I may not get any monetary compensation but I am paying off the "job-hunting loan" I got from my mom.

I enjoy the kind of freedom that a secluded office doesn't provide and the slaves to wages would envy. I don't have to miss my favorite TV shows. I play my CDs and VCDs again and again. I have my siesta without worrying about anything. I have all the time to write articles and read some stuff I find interesting. Best of all, I don't have deadlines to beat, irate customers to argue with or grouchy bosses to please (except my mother who nags me at times).

Bumming has transformed me into a domesticated smart ass but it hasn't diminished my idealism. For me this is just a pit stop that gives me time to check the map on the road trip called life. It has allowed me to rethink my priorities and pursue my interests.

I have never considered myself as a discouraged job-seeker. I must have applied to a hundred jobs now, but I don't think this is a reason to be disheartened even in the face of so much freeze in hiring and streamlining among companies. The right job will come to me in due time. I will not let any opportunity pass without giving it my best shot.

If being a houseboy is the prelude to my becoming a domestic helper, caretaker, caregiver or perhaps house-husband (the biggest no-no), I won't cry foul. Desperate times call for desperate measures.

In the meantime, I can look back and examine closely the two and a half months when I was a workhorse. I am sprucing up a bit, getting rid of stubborn pimples and starting to molt from my geeky self so that I can do a better job of marketing myself. I am taking self-made exams and preparing for my future interviews.

By doing a lot and thinking a lot, I have made myself productive. I have started to conceptualize the blueprint for my administration, my platform of government and my priorities. Of course, I have also thought of the many legal ways to fund my presidential campaign. I've been considering the following options, which require zero capital: writing a best-selling novel about the tragic love affair of a Spanish sailor and a native princess during the time of Magellan; developing a new band of super heroes to rival the X-men; coming up with the greatest invention or idea known to man; winning the P1-million prize offered by a local game show.

I don't have to hurry; I will wait for my turn (unlike the desperate politicians that we have at present). Twenty years should be long enough. Whether or not my grandiose dream will be fulfilled, only the future will tell. If this is one of my delusions, like my dream of becoming a superhero like Spiderman, and adventurer like Indiana Jones, a vigilante like The Punisher or a movie star like Hugh Jackman, so be it. But if my dream should come true, I intend to become the greatest president ever. I do not have a Messianic complex, but in times of economic depression and political turbulence, an optimist and a nationalist like me is what this country needs.

But before then, is anyone out there willing to employ the future president who has an impressive work experience as a houseboy?

Diomar Lomboy, 21, earned his AB in public administration at the Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University-Mid La Union Campus.

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Youth welfare not gov't priority

HOW taken we all were by the young Tolits in the laundry soap ad. He was an epitome of youth, bustling with energy and pride; an A-1 student with great potential and, surely, a long way to go. We have lots of Tolits who aspire for education, in the dream of alleviating their parents' suffering, in the hope of providing their own family with a better life in the future.

After all her sugarcoated promises for the youth, President Macapagal-Arroyo and her pack of corrupt lawmakers now deliver to the youth a trifling 11.68 percent of the national budget this year for public education. This will hardly make a difference in the dismal condition of our educational system, which is currently ailing with a shortage of 42,000 teachers, 50,000 classrooms, 50 percent zero electricity and 27 percent zero ventilation. The budget will not even come close to meeting the needs of Ms Arroyo's so-called scholars. She said that, based on the records of the Philippine Health Insurance Corp., there are about 7 million poor PhilHealth cardholders. Sending 7 million poor children to school will cost P56 billion to P70 billion. This already accounts for more than half of the education budget.

In addition, an austerity measure of the President, which will merge colleges and state universities, dims the prospect of a college education for the majority of the Filipino youth. The college dropout rate, which stood at 73 percent as of last year, will definitely skyrocket, while the dreams for a college degree of many youth will be flushed down the toilet.

To suffer most will be the children in rural areas, including indigenous children, as barely a trickle from the education budget reaches their communities. Some make do with the "multi-grade system," in which as much as three grade levels (1-3 or 4-6) are merged in a single class under one "shared" teacher. With empty stomachs and wounded feet, many of them cross two mountains to reach their schools, which become inaccessible during harsh weather conditions. Some, due to poverty, opt to help out in their father's farm instead of going to school.

Already, there are about 1.7 million children, aged 7 to 12 years old, who are out of school, deprived of their right to education. And they will never set foot on even a dilapidated public school because of the worsening economic crisis that the government is trying to solve by reducing social services and exacting from the people heavier taxes.

What will happen to Tolits and many of our promising youth with our educational system rotting and deteriorating? Youth welfare is not a priority of the government.

What happens then to the "future of the world," when the legacy left to the Filipino youth by this country's leadership is that of broken promises, stolen dreams and a bleak future?

—JOANA LIZ JAIME,
Kabataan Para sa
Tribung Pilipino (Katribu),
Polytechnic University
of the Philippines
and Adamson University,
Barangay Pinyahan,
Diliman, Quezon City

Illegal logging vs timber harvesting

I WOULD like to clarify some of the items in the article titled "Logging did not cause calamity, says expert." (PDI, 1/26/05)

1. The "logging" referred to was scientific timber harvesting, a way of harvesting trees to provide space and light for the generation of growing seedlings. If sustainably done, only mature trees are harvested. Illegal logging, on the other hand, causes forest loss.

The article states that "logging, whether legal or illegal, is definitely not the cause of the landslides and floods that happened in Quezon." Illegal logging cannot be set aside as a cause; in combination with other causes—such as geologic, hydrologic, *kaingin*, and land conversion—it could have helped trigger the landslides.

2. The Forestry (not Forest) Development Center (FDC) is yet to conduct a study in Real and Infanta, Quezon; and Dingalan, Aurora. The study will be done in pursuance of the center's mandate in the conduct of policy research. Any conclusion made at this point on the incident would have no basis and would run counter to the scientific and objective process of doing research. Therefore, there could not have been any report on the matter that had been summed up in two pages.

The paper mentioned in the article is part of a series of informative materials on logging and sustainable forest management, which is for dissemination. The dean of the College of Forestry and Natural Resources (CFNR) has not sent a 15-man investigation team.

3. The paper mentioned is not a product of two deliberations by the FDC and faculty members of the college. The CFNR conducted a free-wheeling discussion on the incident which was also attended by its students. Issues were raised and suggestions were made on how the college could give assistance. There was also a sharing of experiences based on related research and extension activities of faculty members.

4. No paper will be presented to either the environment secretary or the House of Representatives this month.

5. The FDC, which is based at the CFNR, is mandated to conduct policy research in forestry and to develop, or help develop, an effective machinery for forestry policy formulation and implementation.

6. Except for the portions lifted from the paper titled "Sustainable forest management is what the Philippine forests need," all other comments are my personal views.

—ELENO O. PERALTA,
director,
Forestry Development Center,
College of Forestry
and Natural Resources,
University of the Philippines
Los Baños College, Laguna

LETTERS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

'Why do they stick with Erap?

FORMER PRESIDENT Estrada's latest *pakulo*, a committee of five to bring in a new dawn—with the supporting cast of Francis Escudero, Horacio Morales, etc.—has resulted in nothing more than just that," a *pakulo*.

It is incomprehensible why these people, intelligent as they are, cannot detach themselves from a corrupt and disgraced politician and risk earning the stigma of also being morally corrupt because of that association.

Also, I am trying to understand Rene Saguisag for standing up as Erap's lawyer, helping the fight to save Erap from going to prison, in the same way that a lawyer, through skillful legal maneuverings, saved the infamous American gangster Al Capone from going to prison for his heinous crimes. Capone though ended up in prison on a most unexpected charge of tax evasion. In the end, bothered by his conscience, the lawyer came out with the truth and, for that, was killed by Capone's men. I do not wish this to happen to Saguisag though.

Erap's "road show" in Hong Kong proves how filthy rich the man still is (thanks to the Velarde account, huh); and this is the only plausible reason I can see why these once respectable guys stick it with Erap. Surely, it must be costing Erap plenty to buy the respectability that he probably believes their association will bring him to save his neck. To crooks, everything else is money, to hell with integrity.

Not surprisingly, the country is now No. 2 in the world in corruption. And it begins from the top of the leaderboard.

—CESAR M. DE LOS REYES,
cesdlrey@i-manila.com.ph

Dead set on cleaning up AFP

I AM writing in response to the column of former Supreme Court Justice Isagani A. Cruz—"In aid of grandstanding." (PDI, 2/5/05)

As chair of the House of Representatives' Committee on National Defense and Security, I—and the members of my committee—will not stop working to root out graft and corruption within the Armed Forces of the Philippines, in spite of accusations by some sectors that we are merely grandstanding.

Considering the magnitude of the problem, the committee is determined to continue its inquiry in order to identify the sources of AFP corruption so the public will know, and we can craft the remedial legislation.

Ferreting out the truth is an important exercise of legislative oversight in a mature democracy. As eloquently defined by Woodrow Wilson: "It is the proper duty of a representative body to look diligently into every affair of the government and to talk much about what it sees. It is meant to be the eyes and the voice, and to embody the wisdom and will of its constituents. Unless Congress have and use every means of acquainting itself with the acts and the disposition of the administrative agents of the government, the country must be helpless to learn how it is being served... The informing function of the Congress should be preferred even to its legislative function."

I note that one of your learned columnists, the respected dean of the UP College of Law, Raul Pangalangan, obviously agrees with what the Committee on National Defense is doing when he wrote in your Oct. 22, 2004 issue of the INQUIRER: "Significantly, when comrades-in-arms are likewise partners in crime, it may take a highly political body like Congress—and not the courts acting alone—to carry through an investigation. This episode may yet redeem the much-maligned power of congressional inquiry. Critics have often parodied these 'inquiries in aid of legislation.' Perhaps now they must grant our congressmen a little more credit. ...

"Some critics fault our congressmen for 'grandstanding' during the Garcia hearings. I disagree. It takes our elected legislators to take our military to task. Not the President, who is ever so careful lest she provoke another coup. Not the President's Cabinet men and women who are bereft of an electoral mandate and dependent upon the President's political fortunes. And, but for a few shining moments, not the courts either. They are all to refined, their condemnations too finessed, their positions so nuanced. They are incapable of outrage because they tread on dangerous ground when they inquire into power of arms. Ferdinand Marcos' rule by martial law fused them together once, and it took an Edsa People Power 1 revolt to split them asunder."

The Committee on National Defense and Security will remain proactive in doing our part in cleaning up the AFP.

—REP. ROILO GOLEZ,
2nd District,
Parañaque City

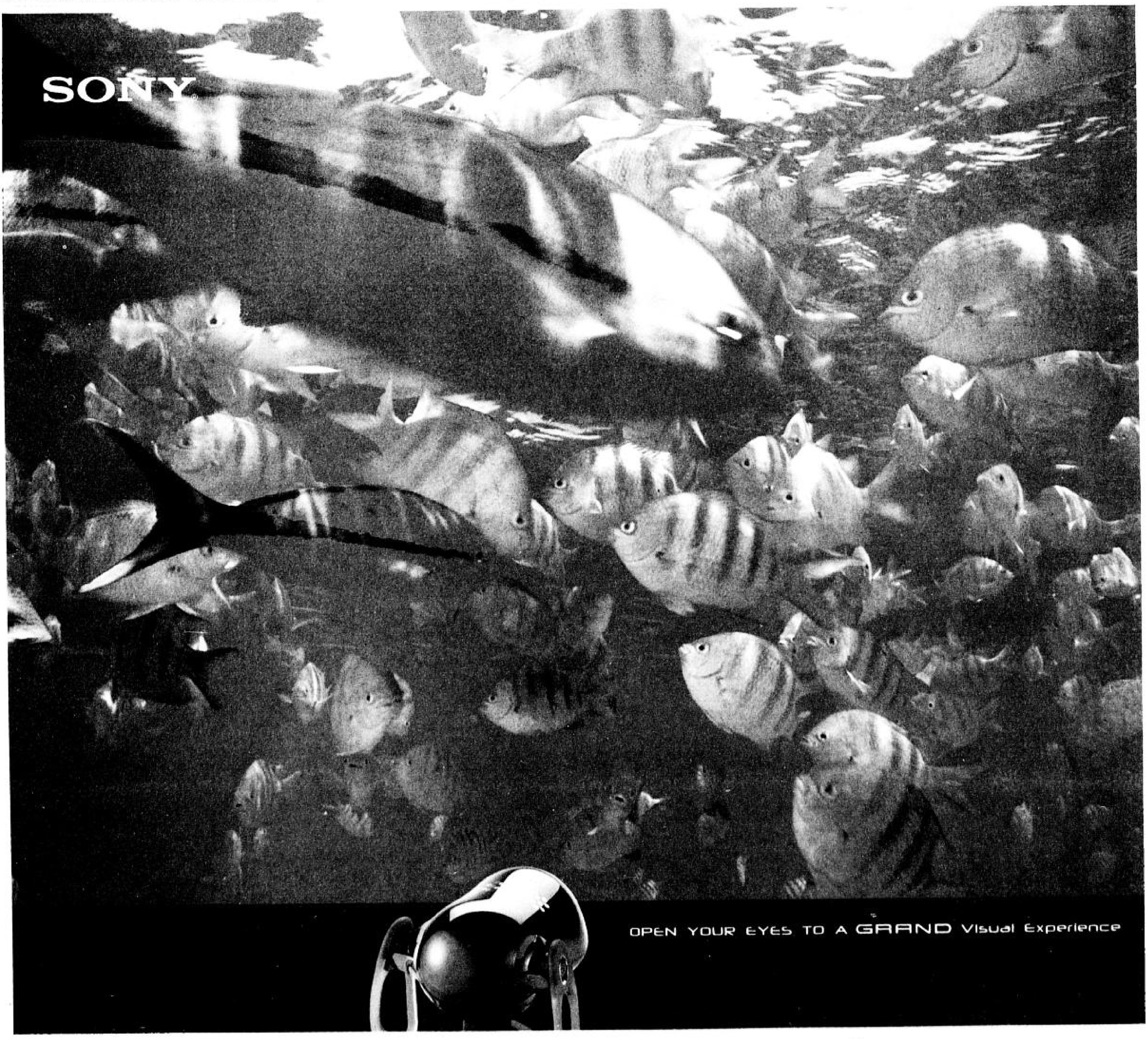
Blame Makati for traffic mess

MAKATI Mayor Jejomar Binay should not blame the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority for the traffic mess at the Kalayaan-C5 intersection.

Traffic was almost smooth when the U-turn slots were in place. But because Binay does not want to be overshadowed by the creativity of the incumbent MMDA chair, Bayani Fernando, he challenges and changes everything that the MMDA implements.

Binay did nothing when he sat as MMDA chair during Erap's time. In fact, he has done nothing for Makati also. *Swerte niya nga lang at naririto ang* business center *ng bansa sa lugar niya kaya malaki ang kita ng kaban ng siyudad* (He's just lucky, the country's business center is in his territory, that's why the city has a big income).

—RICARDO PAREDES,
rick_par@yahoo.com



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By Geraldford Ticke, *PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*
and Greg Refraccion, *PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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AP

COURAGE

Two government soldiers gesture after boarding a military truck that will bring them to the frontlines in the war against an armed group of followers of jailed Moro leader Nur Misuari.

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By Leila B. Salaverria

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Among the counterfeit medicines seized from Guevarra were cough syrups, oral hydration salts, the erectile dysfunction drug Viagra, birth control pills and anti-diarrhea pills.

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But he said yesterday that the cornstarch seized from him were used for chicken feed and not for the drugs.

Upon learning of the suspect's illegal operation, the NBI decided to conduct a buy-bust operation, and a test-buy was conducted to get a sample of the drugs. A certification from the NBI's chemist showed the medicine initially brought from Guevarra were fake and contained cornstarch.

Later, the NBI's poseur-buyer arranged to buy P500,000 worth of various medicines from the suspect.

Guevarra was arrested after the NBI agent handed over the money to him. Also seized from him were medical stocks and a Hyundai Starex van. The suspect also failed to present a license to distribute the medicine.

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Lawyer Florencio Binalay, NBI district chief here, identified the suspects as truck driver Bernie Malabad, and his helpers, Ferdinand Allauigan and Marlon Acop.

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"We are confused. We don't know where to stand. If the DENR did not give us all these permits, we would not have invested so much on this business only to incur losses later [due to seizures]," she said.

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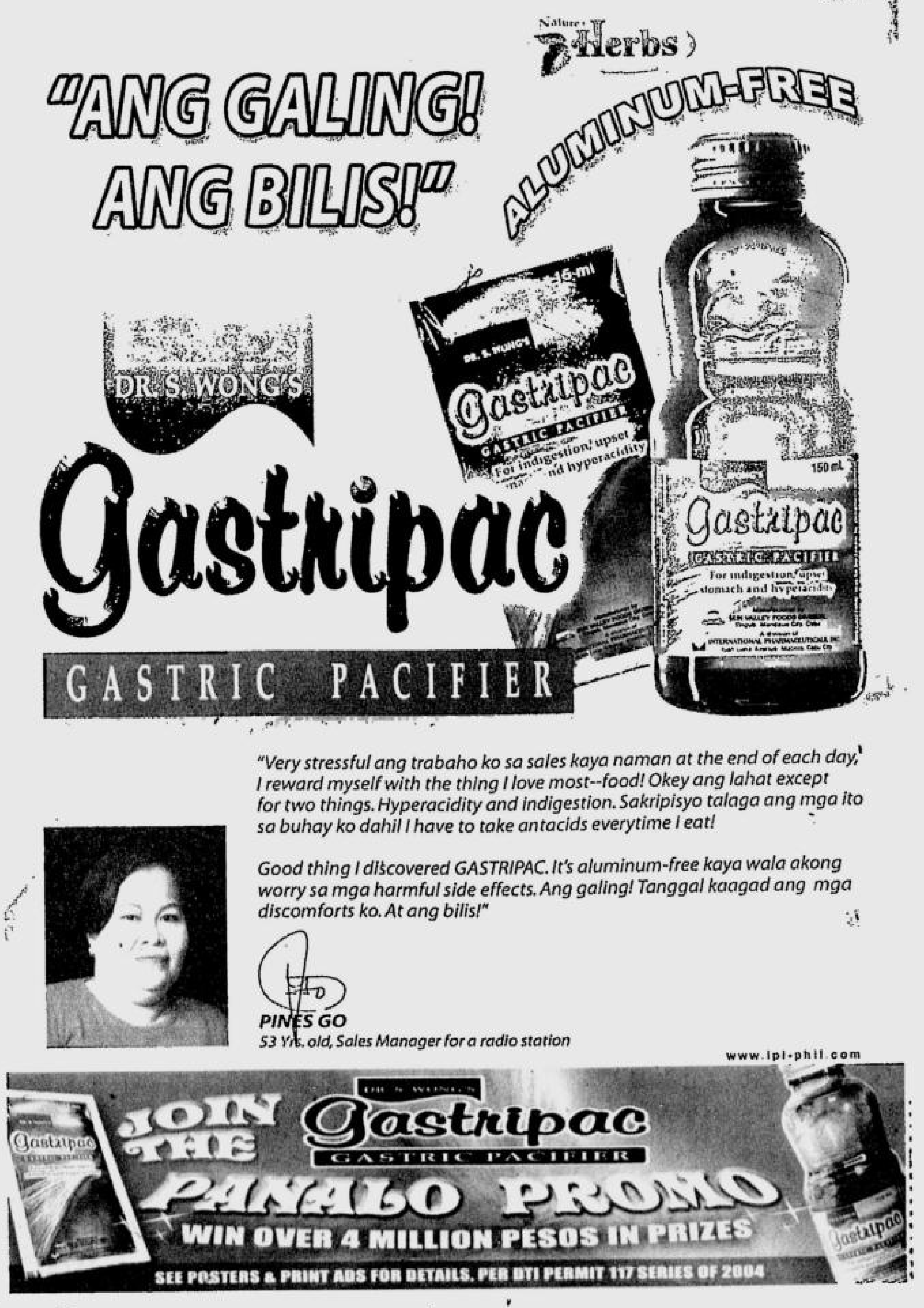

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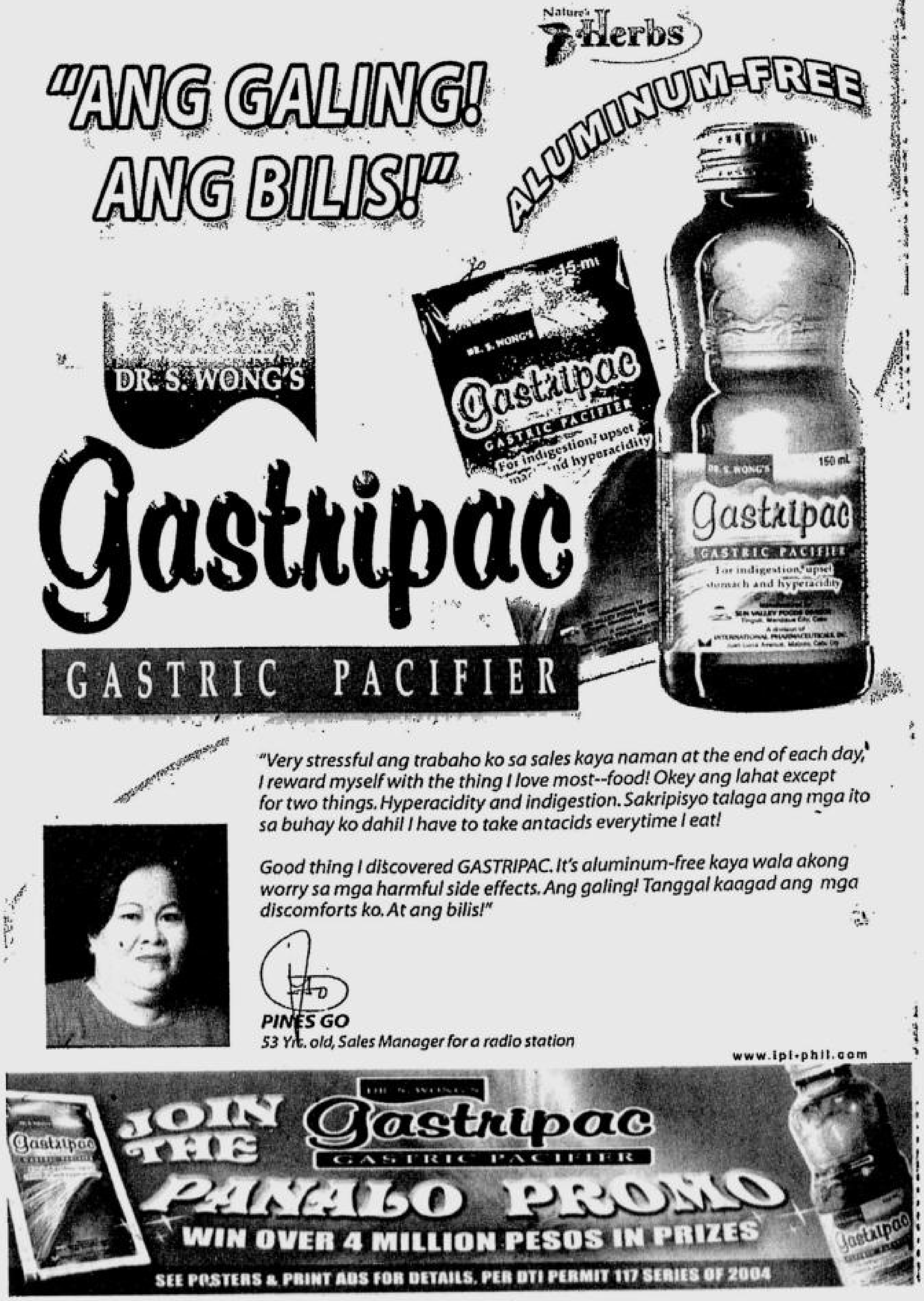

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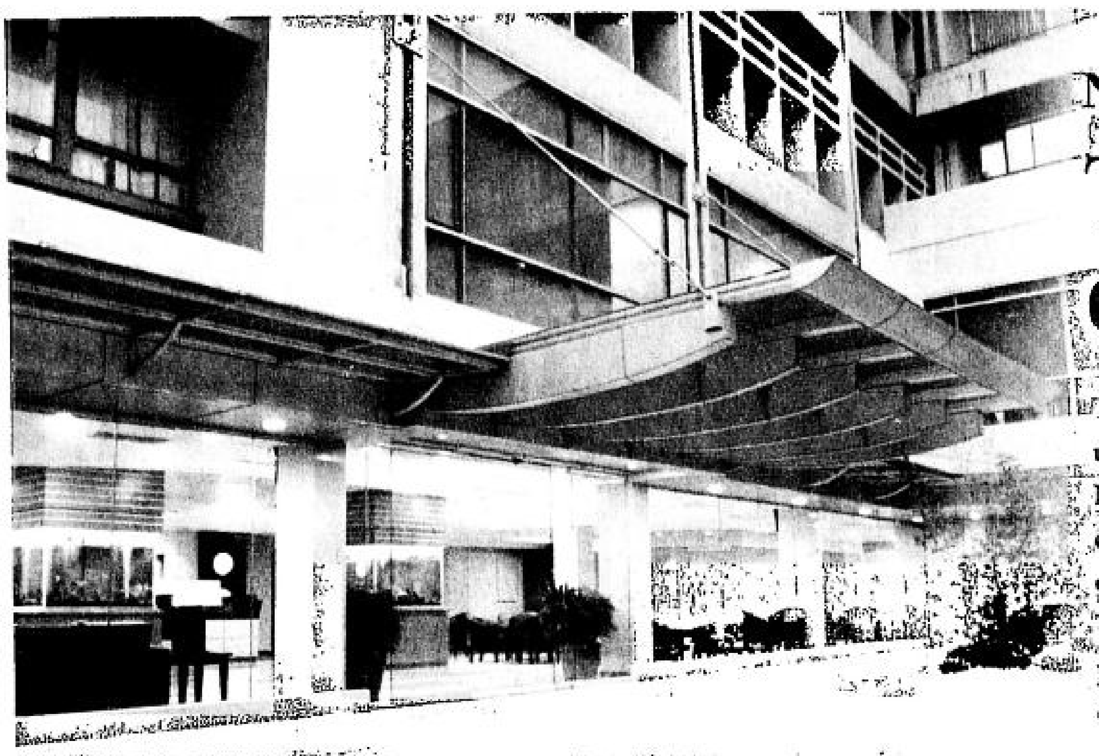

The first tertiary medical center to house all diagnostic and therapeutic equipment under one complex.

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The Cardinal Santos Cancer Center is a concrete proof of CSMC's commitment to putting patients first, as it ushers in a brighter future and renewed hope for cancer treatment in the country.

Cardinal Santos Medical Center (CSMC) unveils the Cancer Center on February 19, 2005. For the first time in the country, a tertiary hospital will offer patients a multidisciplinary, integrated and comprehensive approach to cancer management. Instead of meeting with individual doctors separately, the patient and his family can sit down and discuss with a team of highly skilled oncologists—medical, surgical and radiation. Multidisciplinary conference rooms are set up for that purpose. Chief medical oncologist, Dr. Valorie Chan says, "This is the most important part—the integration of these disciplines and the explanation of the disease. Both the patient and his family can see the three specialties in one sitting and can discuss the treatment options, the limits of each treatment, and the goals to expect. I don't think I see this approach applied anywhere locally."

The patient's convenience is not only the issue. This integrated approach ensures that the patient receives the best treatment program possible. As radiation oncologist Dr. Domingo Gazon explains, "It is the integration of all three modalities—surgery, radiation and chemo—that offers the highest success rate. The timing for each modality should be perfect."

Marking another first, the Cancer Center also houses both its chemotherapy and radiation units in one complex. An area is dedicated to its special pediatrics unit, a glass enclosed section where leukemia patients get chemotherapy treatment on one side and engage in play activities on the other. Chief of pediatrics Dr. Mary Chua elaborates, "We envision it to be a play environment where kids receive treatments. We'll have toys, video games and experts on child psychology to play and stay with the kids, and to counsel the family, to help them cope with the disease at the earliest time possible." In such an environment, the child becomes less threatened by men and women in white, more receptive to undergoing treatments, and thus more successful in fighting the disease.

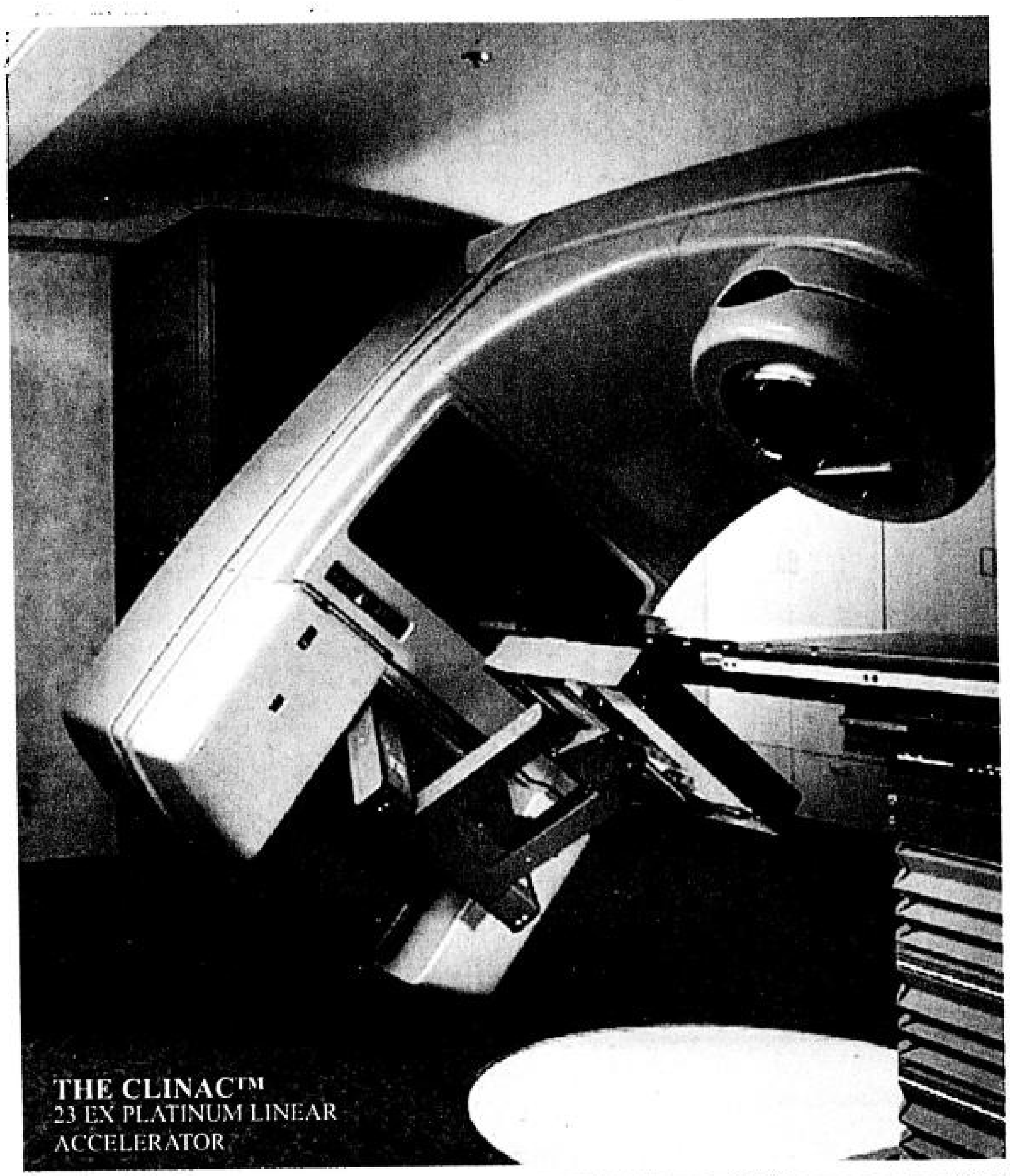
The center has acquired a linear accelerator that would treat tumors while minimizing the risk of toxicity to surrounding healthy tissues. This state-of-the-art non-invasive machine has the capability of performing powerful and very precise techniques: 3D conformal, Stereotactic Radio surgery and Intensity Modulated Radiation Therapy (IMRT). As the name suggests, 3D conformal lets the physician manipulate the radiation cloud to the exact three-dimensional shape of the tumor. The IMRT or intensity modulated radiation treatment, on the other hand, fine tunes the radiation intensity within the tumor. Because the patient receives just enough exposure from the linear accelerator to zap away the tumor, he will experience fewer or negligible side effects from toxicity, compared to the elevated levels associated with conventional and less discriminatory radiation equipment.

Other cutting edge machines include the gamma knife, a highly sophisticated non-invasive radiotherapy machine that destroys brain tumors, and the 16-slide multi-detector CT scan, which, according to top radiologist Dr. Caesar Co, has revolutionary imaging techniques worldwide. This can reconstruct the patient's anatomy in 3D. This is complemented by the hospital's MRI, bone scan and a host of other diagnostic tools.

All these technologies are harnessed by the center's team of dedicated specialists who are at the top of their fields. Led by surgical oncologist Dr. Samuel Ang, the center's director; Dr. Valorie Chan, chief of chemotherapy unit; and Dr. Ed Fragante, chief of radiation unit, the team will employ protocol-based cancer management or "treatment recipes" that are based on data and guidelines from reputable cancer organizations around the world, the Cancer Center plans to establish linkages with leading cancer institutions in the U.S., Europe, China, Japan and Korea. A support group, consisting of psychiatrists, physical therapists, nutritionists and spiritual counselors, will also be on hand to help the patient and his family manage the disease.

CSMC president Ricardo S. Murillo says that the Cancer Center intends to fight the dreadful disease in a broad spectrum. Awareness programs on cancer prevention and screening will be launched through free community seminars and, if plans permit, the tri-media. A more ambitious undertaking is on the drawing board: the creation of a research unit that will document cases and conduct clinical studies, ultimately enhancing the center's disease management.

"Establishing the center is only the beginning of our campaign against cancer," he emphasizes. "Later on we will evolve as we have evolved from just a general hospital to one that has expanded into a cancer specialty hospital."



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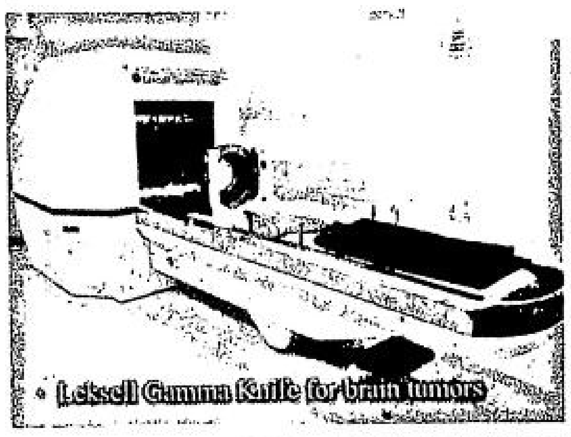
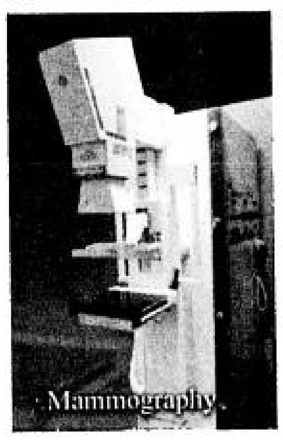
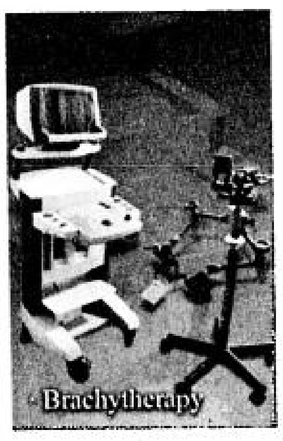


· Leksell Gamma Knife for brain tumors

· Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI)

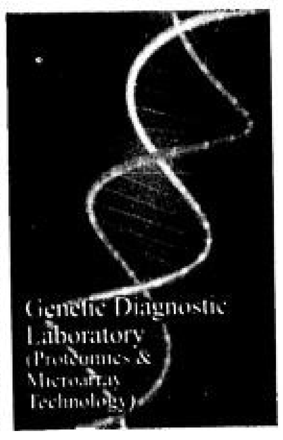


· Mammography

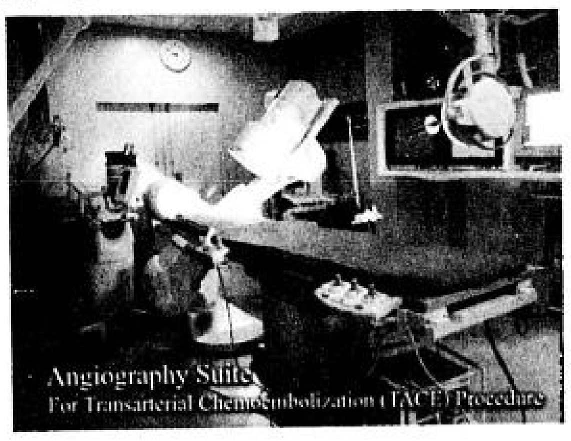


· Brachytherapy

· Cryotherapy for Prostate Tumors



Genetic Diagnostic Laboratory (Proteomics & Microarray Technology)



· Angiography Suite
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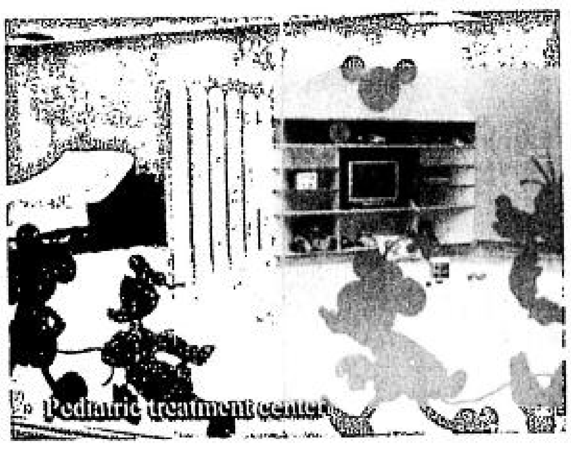
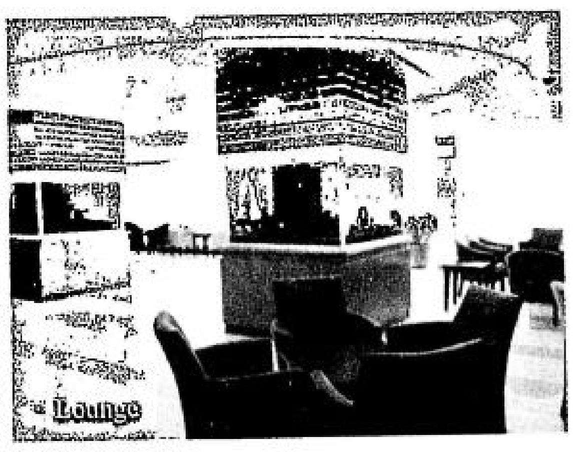
· Adult treatment center



· Pediatric treatment center



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Townsfolk hold vigils for Sto. Niño

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Bugasong, Antique

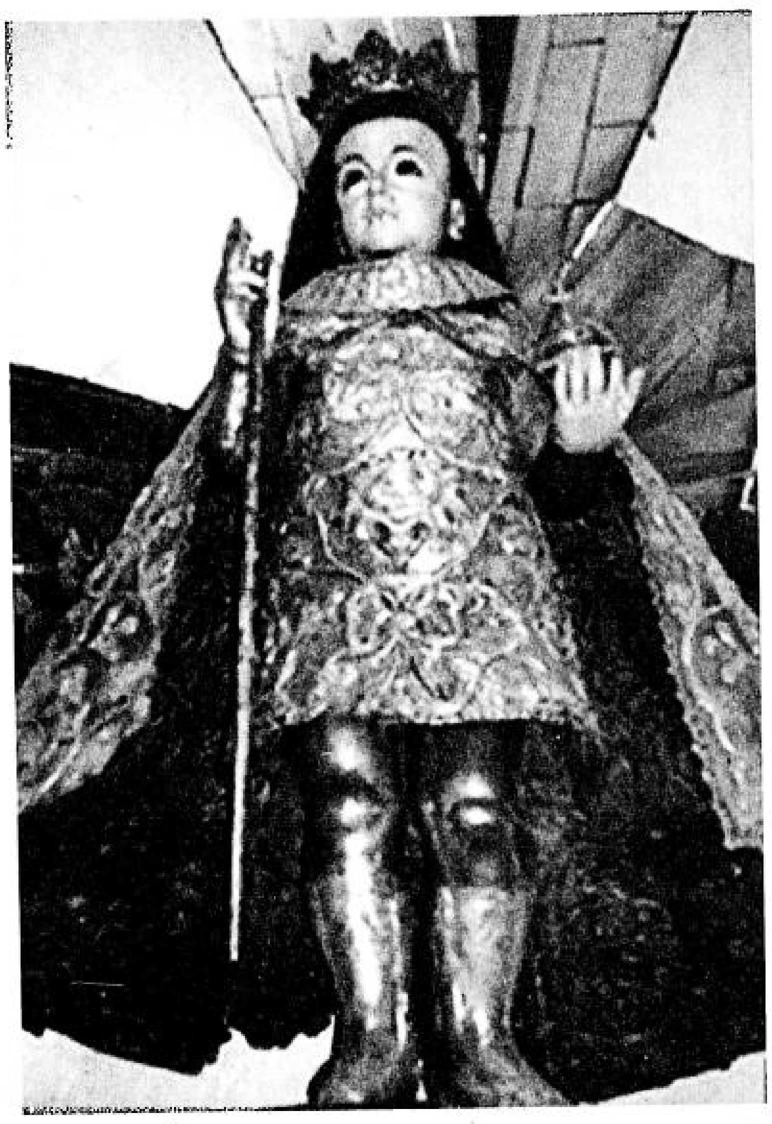
NELLY Undong, 55, wept openly as devotees carried the headless Sto. Niño de Bugasong inside the church. Sadness was also etched on the faces of around 1,500 people who filled the church during the Ash Wednesday Mass.

For nearly three weeks now, the Catholic faithful in Bugasong town, 43 km north of the capital of San Jose in Antique, have been holding daily processions, praying for the return of the hands and head of their Sto. Niño icon.

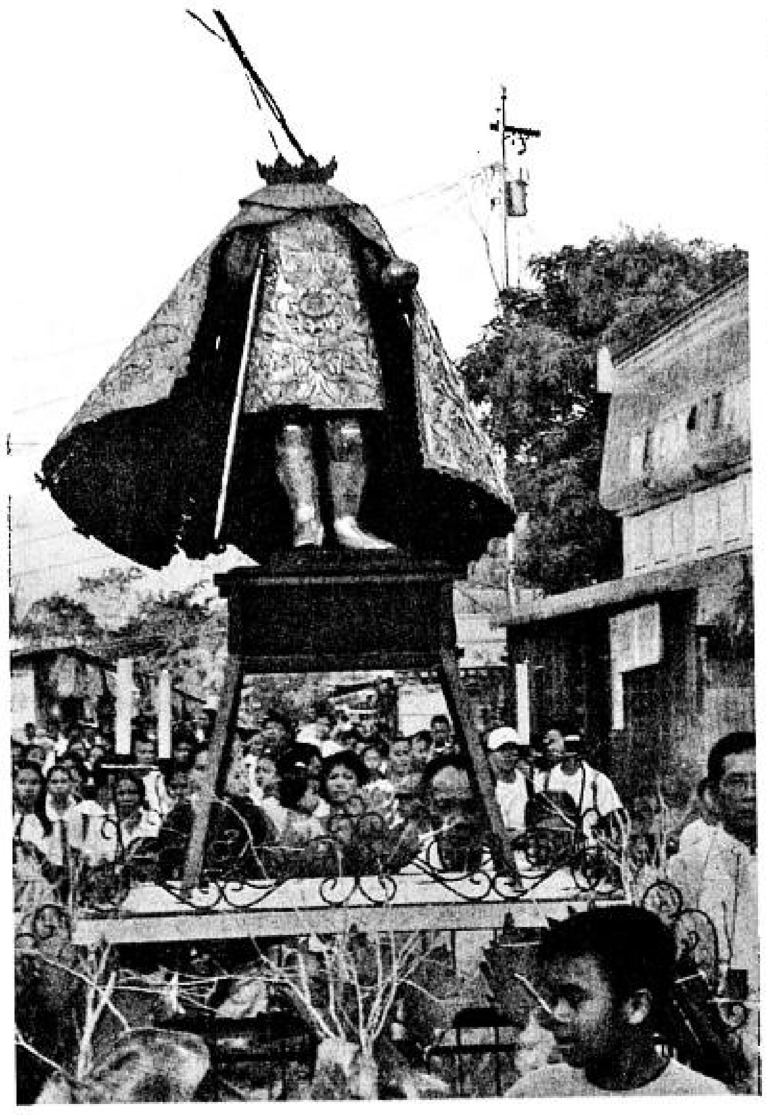
Robbers stole the ivory-made head and two hands of the 300-year-old image on Jan. 30, 12 days after the town celebrated its fiesta. They took advantage of a brownout that lasted until dawn, destroyed the padlock of one of the church's doors and cut off the lock of the iron grills enclosing the image at the back of the church facing the altar.

The mutilated icon was left at a row of pews near one of the entrances. The robbers also left behind a bolt cutter, a cap and a beaded bracelet.

The theft has shocked most of the town's 29,000 residents who are grieving for the symbol of their faith and community.



THE STO. NIÑO in Bugasong CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



BUGASONG residents parade the headless Sto. Niño last Ash Wednesday. NESTOR P. BURGOS JR.

'People power'

Hundreds of people have attended the daily vigils. Those who cannot join the processions light candles in front of their houses during the praying of the Angelus.

In the hinterland villages, people pray the rosary aired through the local community radio.

"We could not describe how we feel. It's as if one of our children was beheaded," Undong said.

She said their patron was responsible for two miracles in her life.

She was childless for 10 years until she and her husband prayed hard to the Sto. Niño. Prayers also cured her son of dengue fever when he was 6 years old, said Undong.

Elders said the Sto. Niño cured the terminally sick and even helped put out fires in the town.

"We feel a great loss because it has been with us for generations," said Ira Villanueva, 54, a lay leader.

He said that when news of the robbery came out, many of the elderly fell on their knees and cried, "as if they have lost a loved one."

On Feb. 9, police arrested five suspects tagged by witnesses, but failed to recover the stolen items.

The suspects were identified as Charlie Guillen, 34, Patrick Zamora, 19, Frederick Almonares, 24, Francisco Orbon, 30, and a 16-year-old boy, all residents of Bugasong. They have denied involvement in the crime.

Almonares later executed an affidavit, pointing to Insp. Marciano Solano, Jr. the town's former police chief, as the mastermind.

Solano denied the accusation. He was relieved from his post a week after the robbery after town officials complained of the slow pace of investigation.

Recovery

But residents are more concerned with the recovery of the stolen parts of the Sto. Niño.

"We cannot hate them (robbers). Justice is up to God and we can only pray that they return it," said Undong.

The Sto. Niño, almost three feet tall, was said to be brought to Bugasong in 1703 as a gift from Queen Isabela of Spain, said Villanueva, citing accounts of town elders. The icon's cape is said to be made of platinum.

In 1983, the whole image was stolen; it was returned only in February 1984. Religious leaders and the police reportedly negotiated for its return from an antique collector in Iloilo City who bought it from the robbers.

While it was returned without any payment, the image was valued at P4 million during that time.

Bugasong parish priest Pedro "Nedy" Silava Jr. said the Sto. Niño image was "priceless."

"We will not stop until they are found," said Villanueva.

Silava has asked for help for the recovery of the stolen parts. Anyone with information could contact him at mobile phone numbers 0917-331-3018, 0920-604-8866 or 0917-305-1103.

Guimaras women talk about 'interval, closure, gateway and journey'

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
Iloilo City

A WOMAN'S river of life has many bends and turns, and one of them is menopause. Some women have negotiated it smoothly while others have had a wild water ride.

Menopause has been worrisome for some women, but it's no big deal for others.

Forty-three women, aged 50-60 years old, were recently part of a study on menopause conducted by the chapter of the Philippine Health Social Science Association (PHSSA) in Guimaras. They came from the towns of Jordan, Sibunag and San Lorenzo.

The study brought out their notions and fear of menopause, which is inevitable as they grow old, as well as their insights into it. Some experiences were hilarious, while others were quite unpleasant.

The authors were Azucena Pestaño, Evelyn Tomambo, Rosalie Joven-Po and Jerraine Monana, all of the PHSSA.

Hiligaynon does not have an equivalent term for menopause, but the women were able to define it by describing their bodily experiences. It's menopause when they experienced "*ang pagdula sang regla kag pag-untat pamata*" (the end of menstruation and the women's capacity to bear children).

A sign that a woman is no longer young, and the start of old age, the end of youth, vitality and beauty, they said.

There is also a notion of being clean, as menstrual blood is considered unclean. For many of them, it is a relief and comfort that they no longer have monthly periods.

Myths

There are as many ways of describing menopause as there are many myths surrounding it. One such myth is the popular "*pasmo*," which defies translation in English. "*Pasmo*" could have happened years before menopause when the young woman was wont to taking a bath and eating green mangoes during her period.

Another myth: If the mother has an early menopause, chances are the daughter will have it early, too. None of these are true, according to medical professionals.

There are many signs and symptoms of menopause, both pleasant and unlikable.

Some of the women experienced hot or cold flashes ("*nagatulo ang balhas kag ginalamigan*"), nervousness ("*ginanerbiyos*"), irritability ("*pirme lang nagasinggit*"), body aches and loss of appetite.

Others cried easily and went through some states they associated with early pregnancy. A few grew drowsy and dizzy.

The common experience was dryness of the vagina that made sex painful and uncomfortable.

The women said they did not fully understand the changes in their bodies. But while these were uncomfortable, not one of them considered menopause an illness. The symptoms would disappear anyway, they said.

Three women went to see a doctor, but they only asked for vitamins.

Trust the menopausal women in Guimaras to work off their feelings and awful days. They "entertained" themselves through singing, playing "*tong-its*" (a card game), walking around, reading the Bible, and working.

They fanned themselves to cool their bodies, talked to friends and relatives, sought spiritual health, consulted an "*arbularyo*" (faith healer) and talked with other menopausal women.

But one woman who experienced crying spells climbed a tree to cry her heart out.

The time of children growing up and leaving home usually coincides with menopause, causing some women to be unhinged.

Some researches said menopausal depression was like post-natal depression, caused by hormones and alterations in body rhythm. But most women manage to survive them without psychological disturbance.

Coconut oil

Menopause does not mean the end of women's sex life, according to the study, but sexual relations are sometimes affected because the women experience dryness. Despite their sexual drive, some women avoided sex because of pain and discomfort. But some remedied the problem by using "*lana*" or coconut oil as lubricant.

No longer at risk of getting pregnant and free from restrictions of motherhood, sex was enjoyable for some women, and they get by with a little help from coconut oil.

So then, what's new with the changes in women's bodies during menopause? They've been through many changes anyway since they were adolescents.

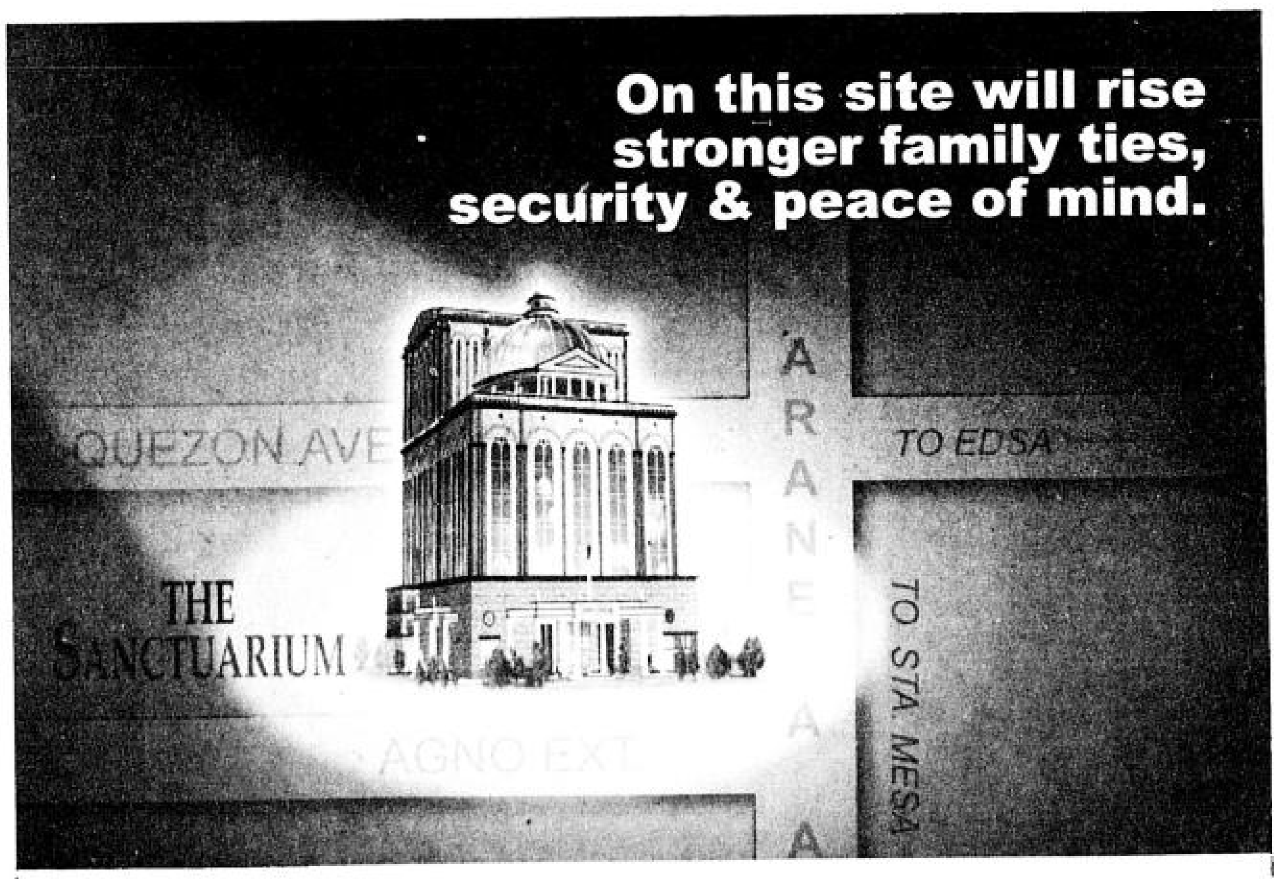
Menopause, as the women of Guimaras said, did not mean a dead-end for one's sexuality. The loss of fertility does not mean the loss of sexuality, meaning that one who is no longer capable of making babies does not mean she's not sexy.

But what is sorely lacking in the women's march to menopause is the lack of information that will help them cope with the bodily changes, the study said. There are no activities they can engage in.

Pestaño, one of the authors, said the women's need for information had not been answered by the health care system. It's a right that should be addressed by the government, she said.

One good practice resorted to by the informants was sharing their experiences with other menopausal women and probably much older women who had been through it.

Menopause is all about growing old and, like many adversities and blessings, women should come to terms with it, the study said.



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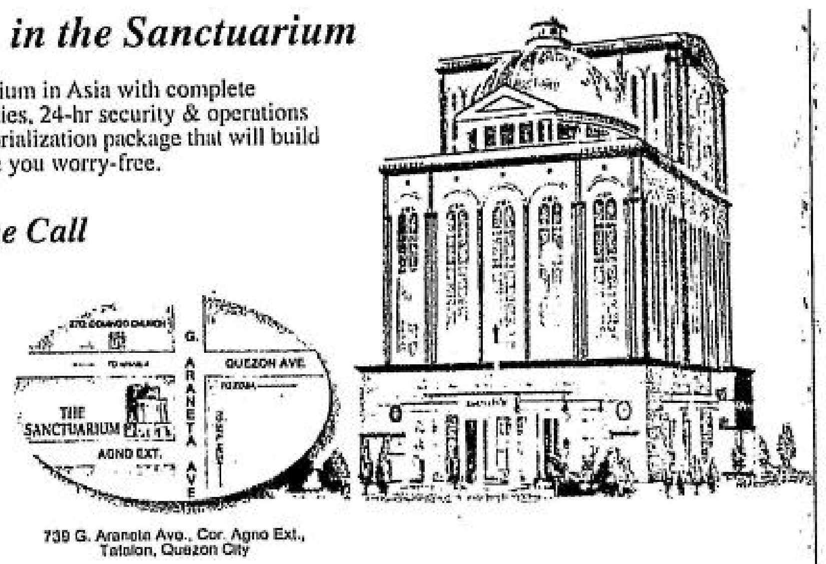

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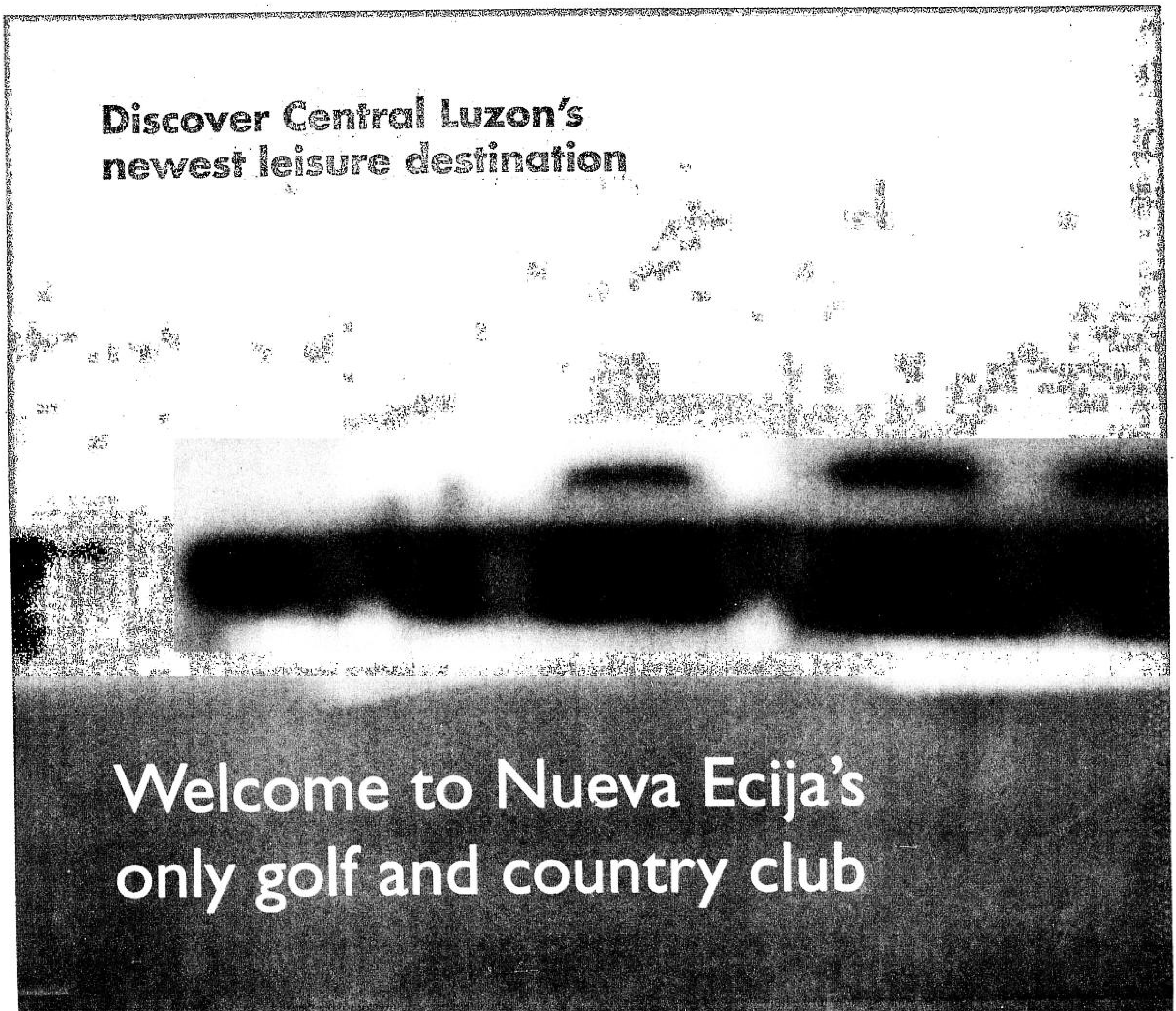

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Palace sees no stumbling block to nat'l ID system

By Gil Cabacungan Jr. and Christine O. Avendaño

MALACAÑANG does not see legal impediments to the establishment of an identification system, first on the local level and later on a national scope, as part of plans to pinpoint terrorists.

President Macapagal-Arroyo said her administration was backing the legislation of a national ID system to comply with a Supreme Court ruling seven years ago stating that the government could not impose such a scheme merely through executive fiat. The President said an ID system could be implemented on the local level through an ordinance, "but for the national ID system we need a law."

Asked to comment on the matter, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye told the INQUIRER: "The Supreme Court did not rule that any ID system law was unconstitutional" but only in the case of Administrative Order No. 308 issued by then President Fidel Ramos.

Bunye said the constitutionality of AO 308 was challenged because it was considered a usurpation of Congress' power to legislate and an intrusion into an individual's right to privacy.

While the tribunal declared AO 308 unconstitutional, Bunye said it was only because the order had "insufficient safeguards and well defined standards to protect right to privacy," and "there was not enough compelling interest to justify intrusion."

Confident

By going through the legislative route, Malacañang is confident of finally implementing a national ID system that; according to Ms Arroyo, is "one of the key elements of the antiterror or internal security bill now in Congress."

Bunye also does not expect legal complications from the President's order for provincial boards to adopt an ID system in their areas that would strip terrorists of the cloak of "anonymity and mobility."

"Whatever law is passed in the provincial level is presumed legal and constitutional until proven otherwise. So, while there is no national bill, local and provincial governments have the right to pass their own laws in the interest of public welfare to protect their constituents. These ordinances are presumed valid and regular until tested in court," he said.

Bunye said Filipinos had nothing to fear from a national ID system and other antiterror schemes.

"Law-abiding citizens [who] are not hiding anything they have nothing to worry about," he said, and noted that the United States, United Kingdom, France, Canada, Israel, Australia, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore had strong antiterror laws.

"It is timely that we pass our own version of this law, especially in the wake of rising incidence of terrorism," Bunye said.

Executive order

But Senate President Franklin Drilon said the Palace, and not Congress, should implement the planned system.

Drilon said he favored such a system but stressed that this could be best addressed through an executive order. "If you are coming up with a law, that would entail long debates," he told reporters in a news conference.

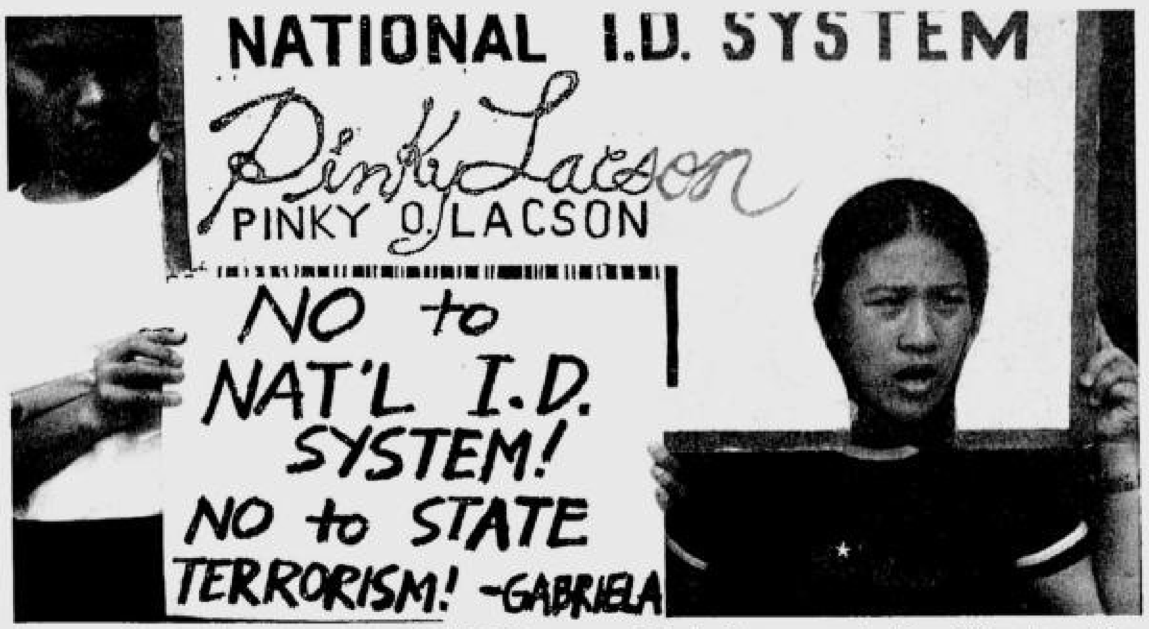
He said Ms Arroyo could just issue an executive order so that all the ID cards of the various government agencies could be consolidated into one card.

"The Social Security System can be the base for this ID system because it has the widest membership," Drilon said.

But Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago observed that Filipinos were notorious for forging documents.

"If you're issuing a paper with pictures on it, then it's not going to serve the purpose," she said.

Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan said such a system "might open the floodgates for possible human rights abuse."


NATIONAL I.D. SYSTEM
Pinky Lacson
PINKY O. LACSON
NO to NAT'L I.D. SYSTEM! NO to STATE TERRORISM! -GABRIELA

BLUSHING pink poster announces Gabriela's fierce opposition to the proposed national ID system at the press conference of the militant women's group in Quezon City on Friday. JOAN BONDOC

'Cedula'

Sen. Joker Arroyo said the concept of a national ID system was not new.

He said Spaniards required Filipinos, then called "Indios," to carry a *cedula,* their own version of an ID. But the Indios responded by tearing up their *cedulas,* sparking the Cry of Balintawak that led to the Philippine Revolution.

Arroyo said that in the Philippines' history, no government dared impose a national ID system.

"Even President Ferdinand Marcos, during the martial-law period, was very careful not to insist on it. We cannot belittle or ignore history and our culture," the senator said, adding that Ms Arroyo was again being deluded by "an unthinking, unfeeling support staff."

He said Malacañang wanted more taxes because it did not have enough money.

"Now it wants to invade the people's privacy ... as a defense against terrorism. In other words, whenever the executive cannot cope with a problem, its standard excuse is the inadequacy of existing laws and so it passes the problem to Congress," he said.

'What are you hiding?'

To those opposing a national ID system, an angry Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes has this question: What are you hiding? Your age, your height, or your weight?

"If you have nothing to hide, you have nothing to fear," he told reporters in Camp Crame when asked if the proposal would not violate a person's privacy.

Reyes said the proposed national ID would contain only the bearer's basic personal information such as full name, birth date, height, weight and other "distinguishing features."

He said it would be no different from a community tax certificate or *cedula,* driver's license, a senior citizen or SSS card.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson urged Metro Manila mayors to help support a single national ID system instead of imposing their own systems.

Lacson said the establishment of varied ID systems nationwide could confuse travelers, tourists and investors. *With reports from Michael Lim Ubac and Christian Esguerra*

Poverty ...

From page A1

lem, the government has to borrow to meet its operational requirements," it stressed.

Debt burden

As such, the ADB noted that debt interest payments increased to more than 30 percent last year, crowding out the productive portion of the national budget.

"Predictably, government expenditures in social services have been steadily falling," it said.

Other constraints to economic growth, the report said, included very low investment levels, caused by the poor investment climate.

As a result, it said the country was suffering from limited capital formation, limited productivity improvements and limited competitiveness of firms.

Corruption, tax issues

ADB's 2004 survey of the investment climate in the Philippines found the major stumbling blocks and constraints to private investment to include macroeconomic instability, corruption, electricity and tax issues.

"A high population growth rate thwarts the country's attempt to grow the economy, to create enough jobs and to provide quality services," it said.

The Philippines' population growth rate is 2.36 percent per year, a rate which the ADB said made it difficult to accommodate all new entrants to the labor force even if economic growth were accelerated.

"A rapidly growing population also makes it difficult for the government to keep up with the delivery of what are already deficient public services in health, education, water supply and sanitation, and so on," the report said.

"The empirical record shows conclusively that larger families are more likely to be poor. Only 19 percent of families with 3 members were poor in 2000, while the poverty incidence among families with 8 members was 55 percent," it said.

Vicious cycle

"Poverty and population together form a vicious cycle: poverty perpetuates high population growth rates (poorer women have higher fertility rates) and high population growth rates perpetuate poverty," it said.

The bank said investment in human capital formation was the foundation for poverty reduction.

"Without adequate levels of human capital—knowledge, skills and health—the other assets will be less productive. Once admired in Asia, the quality of the Philippine public education system has been steadily eroding," it said.

"Many of the indicators are on a downward trend, such as the net enrollment ratio ... and the literacy rate."

"English skills, traditionally one of the competitive advantages of the Philippines, have also deteriorated," it said.

---

3 blast suspects known

From page A1

of his office.

Looking for mastermind

Pressed further on their identities, Garcia stepped back and said: "What we can tell the public is we are doing everything to identify and arrest the perpetrators."

He said the police were now validating the information from the witness and that they wanted to apprehend not only the direct participants, but also the mastermind.

"We also want to know their affiliation," Garcia added.

Garcia said the witness "was not a participant" in the bombing.

Four witnesses

Investigators now have four credible witnesses, including the driver, the conductor, the walk-in witness and Mary Lou Jacaba, one of the victims of the blast, Garcia said.

"We are verifying all the information because we don't want to take any chances," Garcia added.

According to Garcia, the witness called police hotline 117 and volunteered to help. He said the witness told the operator about knowing the suspects of the bombing.

"The witness proceeded to Makati police because he refused to go to a station near the area where he and his family live," Garcia said.

Muslim doubts witness

He said the suspect arrived at the Makati police headquarters while a closed-door meeting between police and local government officials was going on.

A Muslim member of Congress cast doubts on the credibility of the police witness.

Anak-Mindanao party-list Rep. Mujiv Hataman said if the witness was really bothered by his conscience because of the terroristic act, he should have gone to the authorities before the blast occurred.

"If he really knew something, he should have surfaced before the bombing took place," Hataman said in a phone interview.

Culiat people afraid

Hataman led a rally of 100 Muslims at the Chino Roces Bridge in Manila yesterday to condemn the Feb. 14 bombings and denounce an antiterrorism bill pending in Congress.

Hataman, in particular, expressed suspicion about the witness' alleged pronouncement that the Makati bombers were hiding in Culiat, where there is a Muslim community.

"The people in Culiat are now afraid that raids will be conducted in their community," he said.

Woman with no name

WHO was she?

Five days after she was killed in a bomb blast inside a passenger bus in Makati, she was still a woman without a name.

Her badly charred body still lay unclaimed at the Veronica Funeral Parlor in Pasay.

Until yesterday.

Police said a lady had come to the parlor and said the body might be that of her mother, Rosario Mercado, 55, of Dasmariñas, Cavite.

The claimant was Angelica Mercado, 27.

But the victim was burned beyond recognition, making it hard for investigators to identify it, PO2 Noel Pardinas said.

Dr. Voltaire Nulud of the police scene-of-the-crime team has proposed that DNA tests be done on the victim and on Angelica to see if their characteristics would match.

The result of the planned six DNA tests will be known in two months.

Only then will the parlor be able to release the body, police said.

Which means that only then will Angela's anguish probably end. *Irene C. Perez*

'He was a quiet, kind man'

By Irene C. Perez

CIVIL engineer Ronnie Soriano was all dressed up for work on Valentine's Day. As he was about to leave, his aunt teased him not to go to work but go, instead, on a date.

Soriano shrugged and said he had no girlfriend, that he'd rather work because times were hard. Besides, Ronnie said, he needed to send his two brothers to school.

That was the last time Soledad Torzal saw her nephew. Later in the day, she heard he was wounded in the bombing of a passenger bus in Makati and that he was among the badly injured.

Yesterday, at around 4 a.m., four days after he was wounded and sank into a coma, Ronnie died at the intensive care unit of the Ospital ng Makati, aged 27. He was the fourth fatality in the Makati blast.

"I held his hand every night when I talked to him. I told him: 'Please fight, you could still do a lot of things here on earth. But if you are in too much pain, we understand'," Soledad said.

Ronnie would show signs of life by pressing his hand against hers.

A quiet man

No one could tell if Ronnie was inside the bus that exploded. Relatives said he might have been on the way home from a condominium construction site for San Jose Builders in Cubao, Quezon City, when he was struck by the bomb.

Ronnie was the eldest of four children.

His brother, Ricky, described him as a quiet man who was dedicated to his family.

Another brother, Bobby, 22, is an electrical engineering student at Polytechnic University of the Philippines while Gerry, 21, is taking up computer programming at Datamix.

Ricky said his brother hardly went out, but they would play street basketball every Sunday.

Love for his family

"He cared too much for his family. He just watched basketball at home. Ronnie was very simple. He didn't even have a favorite food," said Ricky, an agriculture graduate.

Ronnie, who studied at Catanduanes State University, lived with his brothers and relatives in a compound on Cabasaan Street, Zone 3, Signal Village, in Taguig.

Their mother died when Ronnie was still a little boy.

Father couldn't accept

The father, Fernando, a vegetable vendor, came all the way from Bicol to see his son at the hospital.

He could hardly accept that his son was dead, the aunt Soledad said.

"We told him that it was an accident and there was nothing we could do," she said.

Soledad also described Ronnie as a quiet man who was also kind.

High school reunion

"Even if you ask all our neighbors, no one would say a bad thing about him," she said. "He would always be just smiling."

She said that Ronnie was looking forward to his high school reunion on Feb. 25.

"All of his former classmates were crying in the hospital. They didn't mind even if he was all bloodied," the aunt said.

'Ronnie is in heaven'

Ronnie went by the name "Bong" and when he was still unemployed, his aunt used to tease him from time to time: "When you get a job, treat us to a bottle of Coke."

Fond of kids, Ronnie was particularly close to his nephew, Francis, a 2 1/2 year old boy.

Now, Soledad said, when they asked the boy where Ronnie was, Francis would say that he was in heaven.

Social cost of fighting staggering, says solon

From page A1

someone to unify them, Capalla said, adding:

"The people need a unifying symbol ... Misuari was the only one who could articulate very clearly the convictions of the Bangsamoro people. [He] is ... like a prophet to [them]."

Capalla is also president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines. But the CBCP as an organization has yet to make an official stand on Misuari's continued detention in a Laguna military camp on rebellion charges.

War budget

Amin said that based on studies on the costs of war from 1970 to 1996, the government spent about P76 billion in fighting in Mindanao. He said that in 2000 alone, P6 billion was spent on the military attacks on areas controlled by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

"How many billions will be spent in the present military offensive?" Amin said in a statement. "At the risk of sounding like a broken CD, I would dare say that the war budget will definitely be better spent on medicines, school buildings and even food for our hungry population."

Amin said the rising death toll on both sides, the negative impact of the war on tourism in Mindanao, and the probability that it would spread to nearby provinces were enough reasons to declare a ceasefire.

He said it was ironic that despite Sulu's rich mineral and other resources and its being a center of trade and government six centuries ago, the National Statistics Office had tagged it the poorest province because of the on-and-off hostilities.

"Even with the hard work of the people in Sulu, the province remains impoverished because it has become the favorite battleground," he said.

US presence

Amin said a halt to the military offensive in Sulu was needed to belie the impression that prolonging the war there was intended to divert public attention from pressing issues like the passage of the expanded value-added tax law and the rising costs of oil and other basic goods.

On the alleged US presence, he said: "I believe our government must properly explain to us the role played by the United States in the present conflict.

Amin called on the House committees on national defense and on foreign affairs to exercise Congress' oversight function and look into the possible link between the US military and the Sulu conflict.

He conceded that the "whole truth of the conflict" may not be immediately known. "But what is essential and most urgent at the moment is to deal with the evil effects, the negative impact, and the social cost of war. And this can be addressed by declaring an unconditional ceasefire," he said.

Symbol of hope

In an interview at the fourth Biblical Congress in Tagaytay, Capalla said that while Muslims did not view Misuari as a religious leader, the former chair of the Moro National Liberation Front stood as a symbol of hope for them.

"You cannot destroy the symbol of a people," Capalla said, adding that despite Misuari's "limitations" as then governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, "he still has no equal as a Bangsamoro leader."

The archbishop—who has worked in Mindanao for 30 years and was one of those who helped in the peace talks between the government and the MNLF—also said Misuari was a leader recognized by the Organization of Islamic Countries and all over the world.

He recalled that even the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos took care to deal with Misuari, who was "handled very well" by Marcos' generals while in detention during martial law.

Malacañang has earlier rejected calls to free Misuari, saying this would be "tantamount to giving up the fight against insurgency."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Free dentures put smile on traffic enforcement

From page A1

(MMDA) traffic officers.

They comprise the first batch of the 220 men to benefit from the "Bagong Ngiti sa Dating Ngebu" project of First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo.

"*Kailangan ang* enforcers *medyo nakangiti ng konti sa pangliuhuli para 'di sila mukhang nangongotong*. [Traffic enforcers should smile when they are apprehending erring drivers. If they scowl, it would look like they're asking for bribes]," MMDA chair Bayani Fernando said.

TRUE OR FALSE: MMDA traffic enforcer Rodrigo Alvino gets a new set of teeth on Friday courtesy of Mr. Mike Arroyo's "Bagong Ngiti sa Dating Bungi." The privately-funded project benefits 230 toothless traffic enforcers.
ERIK ARAZAS

Hard to communicate

Arroyo, who calls his project a "gift to renewed confidence," said that enforcers with bad or missing teeth tend to cover their mouths while speaking, making it hard for them to communicate.

Ricardo Alvino, 60-year-old father of six, said it was his first time to wear dentures. He had lost all his upper teeth, he said, and his meager salary did not allow him to have dentures made.

"I'm ashamed when I talk to people because they think I'm funny," he said. "I've been called names like '*bungal*.'"

Eyes, teeth sparkling

Alvino gamely posed for before and after shots—with eyes and teeth sparkling.

Avelina Villame is not new to wearing dentures. However, she had been wearing the same set since 1982.

"I never had a new set made because I'd rather spend [the money] on my six kids," the 48-year-old traffic enforcer said. "This new, updated set not only saves me money, it has given me self-confidence," she said.

Fernando said that when he learned that police officers and market vendors were the first recipients of the project, he told Arroyo not to forget his officers who are always speaking to people in the course of their job.

By putting teeth in the law enforcers, "they can now arrest with a smile," he said.

Metro aides next

Next to get their new set of dentures would be 235 Metro aides, Fernando added.

"Bagong Ngiti sa Dating Ngebu" kicked off in October last year. The First Gentleman said that P2 million, which all came from private funds, had been spent for the project giving brighter smiles to 2,410 people to date.

GMA warns of debt crisis . . .

From page A1

ment fails to raise the P80 billion in additional revenues and savings it needs to tame the budget deficit.

"The bottom line is we need to raise P80 billion [through] legislative measures and P100 billion [through] administrative measures. Otherwise, in two years time we will be an Argentina," the President said in a speech in Loboc, Bohol, yesterday.

In August 2004, the President declared that the country was in a fiscal crisis on fears that it was treading the same path as debt-ridden Argentina, but unaccountably declared it solved less than three months after.

Finish economic reforms

The US-based Moody's Investor Services last Monday rated the Philippines a bigger credit risk—which would mean $114 million in additional interest costs for the country each year—largely because of the continued build-up in government and foreign debt which make the country vulnerable to economic shocks.

"We dodged the bullet this time, let us not push our luck. Let's do the economic reforms and complete them," Ms Arroyo said.

"We expect a rosier tomorrow if we all work together, if we have clear direction, if we work in Congress for our economic reforms," she said even as her tax-reform legislative package is meeting stiff resistance in the Senate and among consumer groups.

Some have pointed out that the President, who has blamed media for feeding the credit-rating agencies with a constant diet of negative news on the country's dire fiscal situation, has also to share the blame for the stinging downgrade from Moody's because of her indecisiveness in pursuing her fiscal reform program.

GMA shares blame

She has seemed helpless to do anything about the watering down of her tax measures by legislators, it was pointed out.

Palace officials have been busy not only denigrating Moody's two-notch credit rating downgrade but also deflecting the blame for it away from the President.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye yesterday said that it was unfair to blame the President for Moody's assessment which has been disputed by a number of reputable banks such as the UBS, Standard Chartered and the Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Corp.

Bunye also belittled a US State Department's scathing assessment of the Philippines' investment situation which cited the government's failure to root out corruption, reform the judicial system and pass fiscal reform bills.

"The analysts of Moody's and the US State Department must have been on vacation because they based their analysis on old information," he said.

Upbeat on upgrade

Albay Rep. Jose Salceda, an economic adviser of the President, predicted yesterday that the Philippines was sure to get a "positive" outlook in its sovereign credit rating from Moody's this year as Congress would definitely pass the crucial revenue-generating measures.

Salceda, who chairs the House committee on economic affairs, was interviewed on the sidelines of a briefing for investors at the Philippine American Life and General Insurance Co. (Philamlife) late Thursday.

The congressman said the Philippines would get an "upgrade" at least in outlook for this year as the key reform measures were on track.

"With or without the Moody's rating, Congress will pass the reform measures because we know the government needs the revenues," Salceda said.

Although Moody's is not due to make its next sovereign rating on the Philippines until next year, the rating agency can change its outlook anytime.

Outlook

Financial markets tend to react even to just changes in outlook.

A "positive" outlook means that an upgrade is possible in the next rating while a "negative" means a possible downgrade.

A "stable" outlook means the current rating would likely be reaffirmed.

The Philippines' debt ratings with Moody's now stands four notches below the much-coveted investment grade with a "stable" outlook.

Moody's recently lowered the Philippines' foreign-currency rating for government bonds to B1 from Ba2.

Based on Moody's own definition of bond ratings, bonds that are rated "B" generally lack the characteristics of a desirable investment while assurance of interest and principal payments or maintenance of other terms of the contract over any long period of time may be small.

The VAT

Salceda said Congress would likely pass the reform value-added tax (VAT) bill soon, hiking the rate by two-percentage points to 12 percent.

"But a two-year phase-in is a likely compromise: 1 percent in 2006 and 1 percent in 2007," Salceda said, noting that the measure would raise P27 billion in fresh revenues, or 20 percent of the P132 billion existing collection.

"The 12 percent is still lower than Latin America's average of 15 percent and China's 17 percent but higher than Thailand's 7 percent and Indonesia's 10 percent," he said.

Despite opposition from some senators, Salceda said he was confident that the measure would pass.

In addition, he said the government would generate fresh revenues from recent reforms, such as: the approval of sin taxes (P16 billion); the sale of the Masinloc plant (P31 billion); the approved increase in National Power Corp. tariffs (P36 billion), and the reduction of legislative pork barrel (P10 billion).

"There are various cost-cutting and revenue measures that are in progress with reasonable chances of approval," Salceda said.

Napocor assets

For this year, he said the sale of the transmission assets of Napocor would likely raise about P150 billion.

Salceda said the government could also raise revenues from a second wave of privatization.

"We can sell the government stake in San Miguel Corp. and Meralco," he said.

With the Moody's credit downgrade, the country would have to eschew expensive bond issuance and instead access cheaper official development assistance from multilateral bodies like the World Bank, the Bank for International Cooperation, the Asian Development Bank and the International Monetary Fund, Salceda said.

Samsung Mobile had a great 2004 and it will not rest on its laurels. It will continue to provide excellent customer care coupled with pioneering product development and high brand visibility.

2005 Samsung Dealer Workshop Laoag City.

And to be able to carry out its plans for 2005, Samsung called on its most reliable ally, its dealers.

Samsung Dealers with golf expert Boyblue Ocampo.

Samsung executives provided updates and corporate related development to its dealers including the heavy featured line up of phones such as bluetooth, MP3, PDA, Push to Talk and Megapixel cameras for the first quarter of 2005. Mr. Eom also assured the dealers that Samsung will continue to tap into the lifetime value and long term loyalty of its customers through prompt response and action to product inquiry and repairs. It was also guaranteed that Samsung mobile will continue to maintain high visibility through corporate sponsorships, multi-media advertising, consumer promotion and tie ups.

Samsung Dealers parasailing.

Dealers checking the megapixel camcorder phone.

After the strategic planning the dealers took off their business suits and headed to the outdoors for some fun. They played golf, went parasailing and raced in the sands using an All Terrain Vehicle. And the fun does not stop there because when the night set in the dealers were treated to a party where they were applauded and acknowledged for their effort during the past year.

Bobby Uy Kim, Sang Youl Eom, Alfred chang and Deomedes Garbes.

Samsung Mobile Prepares for 2005

For three days Samsung dealers bonded with the Samsung Mobile team including Samsung Pres and CEO Mr. Sang Youl Eom and VP for Marketing and Samsung Mobile Mr. Maeng Dal Bae.

Delegates of samsung dealers workshop during the atv racing challenge.

Jun Yap, VP for ICT Maeng Dal Bae, Samuel Yap and JunJun Ponce.

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Dealers and partners during the parasailing activity.

The three day activity ended on a high note and everyone went back to their stores and offices ready to embark and conquer the challenges of the coming months.

Written by Lotis Soriano
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Police to spend summer in warehouses

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THIS summer, the metropolitan police are heading not to the beaches but to warehouses.

The National Capital Region Police Office has ordered its five police districts to hold random inspections of warehouses all over the metropolis after authorities found an alleged shabu factory in Valenzuela City.

Regional police director Avelino Razon Jr. said the inspections would be coordinated with the Bureau of Fire Protection, which would be checking warehouses as part of the observance of Fire Prevention Month in March.

Another suspected illegal drugs factory was discovered the other day inside an affluent subdivision in Parañaque City.

Public support

Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency spokesperson Bernardo Bondoc credited the cooperation of residents for the two discoveries.

"The public has been very supportive. We have been receiving information from concerned residents," Bondoc said.

The alleged shabu factory in Valenzuela City was discovered last week after people started complaining about its foul odor.

Authorities found drums of liquid shabu, cans of chemicals and equipment used in manufacturing illegal drugs inside the warehouse in Barangay Parada.

Police learned of the alleged shabu factory in Parañaque City through a call to the Patrol 117 hotline. They found about P8 million worth of suspected shabu and chemicals used in manufacturing illegal drugs.

Asked if there might be other shabu factories in Metro Manila, Razon said they would conduct inspections "to make sure" there weren't any.

Bondoc said they were receiving information about other alleged drug warehouses in the metropolis and were trying to confirm the reports.

Change of procedure

Valenzuela City police chief Billy Beltran said the latest discoveries would change the conduct of their inspections. "Before, we focused on warehouses in remote areas. But now we see that shabu laboratories could be operated in crowded areas," he said. Beltran added that the city government was forming a task force to monitor warehouses in Valenzuela.

Beltran said Valenzuela was attractive to shabu manufacturers because there were many warehouses for lease in the area. The warehouses were usually in remote places or in compounds with tall gates and walls ensuring secrecy. The alleged shabu factory in Parañaque City is the fourth to be found inside Multinational Village, police said.

CA denies Strunk bid to junk slay raps

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE COURT of Appeals has affirmed its previous decision upholding the filing of murder charges against Rod Strunk for the killing of his wife, actress Nida Blanca, in November 2001.

In a one-page resolution, the appellate court's former Special 16th Division denied Strunk's motion for reconsideration "for lack of merit," and asked the court to overturn its ruling on Aug. 31 last year. The court's August decision upheld the filing of the murder case against Strunk and the issuance of a warrant of arrest against him.

"We cannot accept the motion for reconsideration. It posits nothing new," said the resolution penned by Associate Justice Renato Dacudao.

"It advances no new argument of the consequence or substance that had not been addressed and resolved in our Aug. 31 decision," it added.

The appellate court had said that there was enough evidence to sustain Strunk's indictment for the killing of Blanca at the Atlanta Centre building in San Juan on Nov. 7, 2001. Blanca (Dorothy Jones in real life) was found dead inside her car parked at the building's sixth floor. Strunk was earlier tagged by suspect Philip Medel as the mastermind behind the killing.

The court said one piece of circumstantial evidence supporting their decision was an entry in a security guard's logbook that indicated Strunk was close to Blanca's car on the day of her death.

Strunk's alibi that he was at home during the hours Blanca was believed to have been killed was not supported by competent evidence, it said, adding that Strunk and suspect Medel knew each other, and spoke to each other using terms peculiar to the crime.

Medel's involvement in Blanca's death was an open secret to his friends, the court said.

US teens pursue mission with no fears

By Margaux C. Ortiz

ALL SMILES. Meagan Van Buren, Heather Gardner and Tyler McCormick: Happy to be in the Philippines.

A DAY before American high school students Tyler McCormick and Meagan Van Buren were set to leave for the Philippines as youth volunteers for the 2005 Operation Smile International Mission, bomb attacks tore through three major cities in the country.

But the two 17-year-old girls remained unfazed, steadfast in their goal to help Filipino children with cleft lips or palates, and other facial deformities face a "smile-worthy" future through plastic surgery.

"Our parents were apprehensive because of the bombings," McCormick, a Malibu High (California) senior said. She said their parents even called up Operation Smile to make sure if it was safe for their daughters to travel.

"But in the end, they relented because they knew how much we wanted to go," Norfolk High senior Van Buren added.

Said McCormick: "I had wanted to go on this mission since ninth grade!"

Van Buren, a Virginia native, admitted that they were a bit nervous about the trip, their first visit to the Philippines. But the girls said their excitement quickly overshadowed their anxiety. "Besides, bad incidents could happen anywhere," McCormick said. "We could never exchange this opportunity of a lifetime for anything."

Both girls head Operation Smile's local chapters in their own schools. They organize fundraisers and awareness campaigns which help finance the organization's activities in 21 countries including the Philippines.

"But we dream of doing our share of the fieldwork, to interact with the children whose lives people behind Operation Smile change through surgery and facial reconstruction," Van Buren said.

When the girls were chosen for the mission, they were "overcome with happiness." Van Buren said she immediately thought of bringing duffel bags full of toys for the children.

McCormick, on the other hand, had another special mission. "My paternal grandmother, Natividad Casal, is a Filipino," she said, adding that her grandmother fell in love with her American soldier grandfather during the war. Casal then went off to live in the United States and never had the chance to come back to the Philippines.

"Apart from fulfilling my longtime dream of helping all those kids, it would be nice to visit the land of my grandmother's birth and maybe even get to know some relatives," McCormick said with a hopeful smile.

With their sponsor Heather Gardner, the girls were assigned to help out during the screening, surgery and post-operation care of children and adults selected to undergo surgery at the Jose Rizal Memorial Hospital in Cavite beginning today until Feb. 27.

Van Buren and McCormick said the experience would help them decide on what course to take when they finish high school. "We are thinking of becoming doctors," McCormick said.

But for now, the girls said, they are just contented with helping harelipped kids smile their first beautiful smile at the world.

Obando backs move to sue DENR over dump

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE FIGHT continues for local officials in Obando, Bulacan opposed to the operation of a garbage facility in Navotas.

Obando councilor Gerald Gomez told the INQUIRER yesterday they were supporting the group which threatened to sue Secretary Michael Defensor of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) if he does not stop the operation of the dump.

The groups November 17 Movement and Sining Yapak (Siyap) are opposing the continued operation of the controlled garbage facility in Barangay Tanza. The groups alleged that the dump violated the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act, or Republic Act 9003, since it did not have an environmental compliance certificate.

But Navotas Mayor Toby Tiangco again defended the facility as safe and legal.

"The facility has been around for a while but the oppositors have not yet shown any proof that the facility is hazardous," Tiangco said. However, he added that they were ready to follow the law limiting controlled garbage facilities until early next year.

METROBRIEFS

Mini Olympics

WANT to play basketball but you can't leave your wheelchair? Go to the Caloocan City High School this morning. There, you can also join other sports like the wheelathon, chess or darts. The city government is holding a mini Olympics for "differently-abled" residents today as part of the city's 43rd anniversary celebration. Apart from wheeled basketball, participants may also join games like the relay race, sack race, or even poster-making and other parlor games. Winners will get medals, trophies and cash. ***Edson Tandoc Jr.***

Kiddie art tilt

"GOD'S HANDIWORK—The Beauty of Nature" will be the theme of a children's art competition to be held on Sunday at the Arroceros Forest Park from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. School children from ages 4 to 12 are invited to join the contest. Manulife Philippines Inc. is sponsoring the competition which will be divided into two categories: the first, for children from ages 4 to 7, and the second, for ages 8 to 12. Anita Magsaysay-Ho, Araceli Limcaco-Dans, BenCab, Leo Meneses and Ernesto Patricio will judge the children's entries which may be rendered in any medium. First prize winners will each receive P3,000, second prize P2,000, and third prize winners P1,000 each. Other prizes will be provided by Mexicali, Regina Children's Shop-Greenhills, Cooks Exchange, Fully Booked, Traditions-Megamall, Sugarhouse, Hidden Springs, Unilever and the Coca-Cola Bottlers Corp. Families visiting the park are advised to pack a picnic lunch, as food and drinks are not sold at the site.

Tutors get back canteen

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE DEPARTMENT of Education (DepEd) has ruled in favor of teachers of the Lakandula High School who had petitioned against the privatization of their canteen.

Though victory came after more than six months of protest action, Grace dela Cruz, a teacher in the Tondo public high school, said they were happy with the decision. Dela Cruz was among those who opposed the privatization of the school canteen.

In a decision on Feb. 11, DepEd Undersecretary Jose Luis Martin Gascon declared illegal the school canteen's privatization in August last year. The teachers sought the DepEd's intervention in the controversy, as they felt the move violated the rights of the teachers' cooperative.

"It is clear that the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) dated Aug. 14, 2004, is contrary to law... Said agreement is violative of the expressed provisions of DECS (Department of Education, Culture and Sports) Order No. 95," Gascon said in his order received by the Manila Division of City Schools Feb. 14.

The MOA was signed by former Lakandula principal Alice Blas and private concessionaire Michelle Pineda, allowing the latter to operate the Lakandula High School canteen. The DepEd decision canceled the private concession. It also ordered Pineda to "cease and desist from further managing and operating" the Lakandula school canteen.

Unpleasant hotel experience

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

TWO FILIPINO "balikbayans" from California, USA, Emylene Jacinto-de Jesus and her daughter, checked in at the Shangri-La Hotel in Makati on Jan. 16, 2005, Sunday.

What happened to them could have happened to other guests of the five-star hotel: They were held up by persons who pretended to be members of the hotel staff.

On Monday night, as they were about to go to bed, mother and daughter received a call from the hotel operator. The operator asked Ms De Jesus if she knew a guy named Abdul and that there were seven people who wanted to go up to their room (Room 2704). She said no, and told the operator they didn't want to see anybody.

But the operator was insistent, telling her to call the head of security, a woman named Lourdes, on her cellular phone.

Lourdes told her she was connected with the Abu Sayyaf and all the hotel employees were "in this together." It would be futile to call for help, Lourdes told her, as the Makati police and some politicians were protecting them.

To make the story short, mother and daughter were forced to withdraw money from Citibank through their ATM cards.

Ms De Jesus and her daughter were taken around Metro Manila by a cab that Lourdes ordered them to take. Lourdes had told them not to hail a cab in front of the Shangri-La Hotel but to walk out to the street to catch a taxi.

I got this information through an e-mail handed to me by a friend. I called up Shangri-La Hotel management and they confirmed that Emylene de Jesus had checked in at the hotel.

Joy Wassmer, the hotel's PR, said that the case was being investigated. She said there was no woman named Lourdes on the hotel security staff.

Asked if the hotel operators at the time were being investigated, Wassmer said that she couldn't divulge some details as yet.

Ms Wassmer said that the hotel had taken additional security steps to prevent a repetition of the robbery, like screening all incoming calls to hotel guests.

I think the De Jesuses were not the first victims of the syndicate. The syndicate has victimized other foreign guests not only in Shangri-La, but also in other hotels.

The sooner the syndicate is busted, the better for the country's tourism industry.

Investigators should start with the hotel operator at the time the De Jesuses were held up.

* * *

The government will soon start the Northrail system that will connect Caloocan City and Malolos, Bulacan, by railway.

The Northrail project is a 32-km double-track railway system. Civil works include the construction of a five-kilometer viaduct, 24 rail-over-road grade separated crossings, eight major bridges, six stations, and a maintenance depot. Estimated total project cost: $421.05 million.

The railway project is expected to perk up business in Northern and Central Luzon and decongest Metro Manila.

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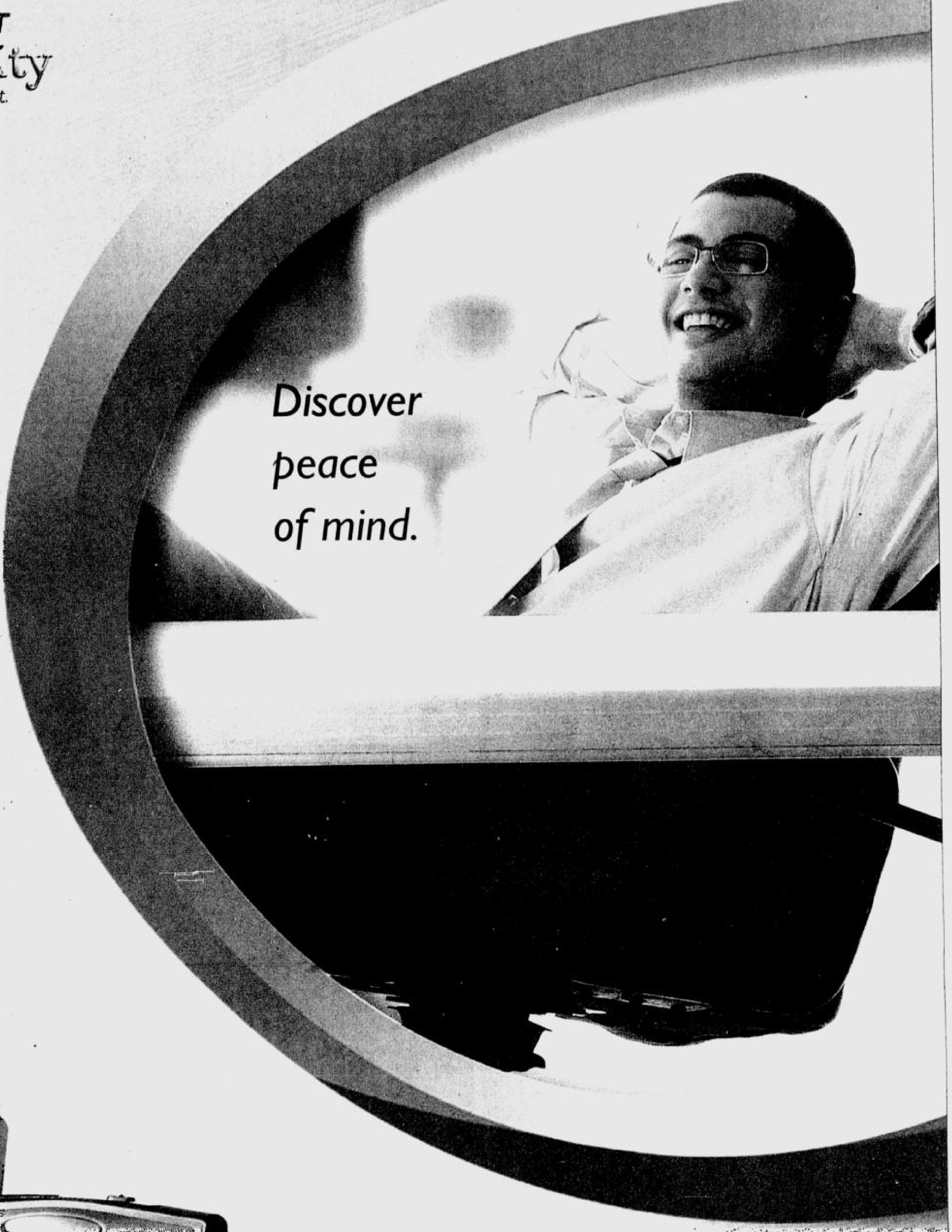

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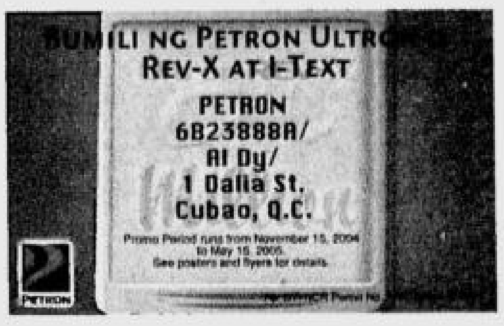
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La Salle bet smashes old Del Prado mark

Sensational Soguilon a cinch to make RP team

FOR THE BOOKS
LA SALLE marvel Waldy Soguilon explodes off the starting blocks on the way to eclipsing the 200-meter record of former Asian champion Isidro del Prado. ERIE U. SARMIENTO

By Marc Anthony Reyes

ISIDRO del Prado's 20-year-old sprint record fell off the books yesterday when La Salle dynamo Ralph Waldy Soguilon zoomed like a bullet off the blocks to win the UAAP 200-meter dash finals.

Soguilon bagged a second gold medal in the meet and basked in glory after eclipsing the national record set by one of the Philippines' most remarkable track stars.

The 5-foot-10 Electronics and Communications Engineering student clocked 21.43 seconds to shatter Del Prado's standard of 21.44 seconds set during the Asean Cup held here on Dec. 2, 1984.

Soguilon confided that his primary aim was only to better his personal best, but surprised himself by shattering the record Del Prado had set in the year he was born.

Soguilon has been campaigning in the national level for the last five years, winning several National Open titles. He also competed in the Asian Grand Prix, held twice here since 2003.

"My goal right now is to make the national team and finally make it to the Southeast Asian Games," said Soguilon, who will most likely be taken into the national training pool.

He didn't appear too concerned about his clocking after crossing the finish all alone, but was happily stunned upon being informed by national coach Jojo Posadas of his feat.

"I didn't intend to break it (record) because I was only trying to improve my UAAP record of 21.80 seconds," said Soguilon. "I am really happy because I broke a record which is older than me."

Del Prado rose to prominence with the likes of Lydia de Vega-Mercado and Elma Muros-Posadas during the Gintong Alay heydays in the 1980s.

WHAT'S INSIDE

- **Morales old and weary, claims Pacquiao trainer** /A26
- **Garnett dominates as Wolves lick Cavs** /A28

Washington 1st applicant in 2005 PBA rookie draft

By June Navarro

HE was born in Zambales, raised in the United States and returned to the country when he felt ripe enough for the Philippine Basketball Association.

Anthony Washington's PBA dream yesterday gained ground as the potential top overall pick next season became the first applicant for the 2005 season rookie draft.

The Don Allado-Yancy de Ocampo trade was finally consummated last night. The 6-foot-6 Allado will play for the FedEx Express while the 6-foot-9 De Ocampo will move to the Alaska Aces.

With his Filipina mother Vivian in tow, the 6-foot-7 PBL Rookie of the Year has submitted some of the requirements needed to get his name included in the official roster of draftees to be identified by the PBA.

Washington, whose father Victor was a US serviceman once detailed in Subic Bay, will be covered by a new board ruling requiring Filipino-foreign players to present additional documents to prove their citizenship.

"He applied early for the draft so that we will know what other requirements he needs to satisfy before the deadline," said Washington's agent, Charlie Dy.

The deadline for application of foreign-born Filipino players is May 1 while homegrown players will have to apply on or before July 15, in time for the Aug. 7 draft.

WASHINGTON: Likely No. I draft pick.

Based on league guidelines for rookie applicants, foreign-bred players must submit an authentic birth certificate issued by the National Statistics Office or any equivalent if the player was not born in the country; authenticated birth certificate of his parents, marriage certificate of the parents or, in its absence, any proof of affiliation, including DNA test results.

Foreign-born players must also submit duly notarized and authentic naturalization papers of the parents and affidavits of at least three persons attesting to the player's Filipino lineage.

Foreign-born applicants will also be interviewed by the league and should have played at least 25 games in an amateur commercial or collegiate league before he gets included in the final consolidated list of draftees.

These documents are apart from the Department of Justice confirmation and the Immigration's certificate of recognition required by the league.

"When I asked (PBA) commissioner (Noli) Eala about Anthony's case, he told me that the DOJ confirmation wouldn't be necessary anymore since the applicant is already a Filipino passport holder," said Dy.

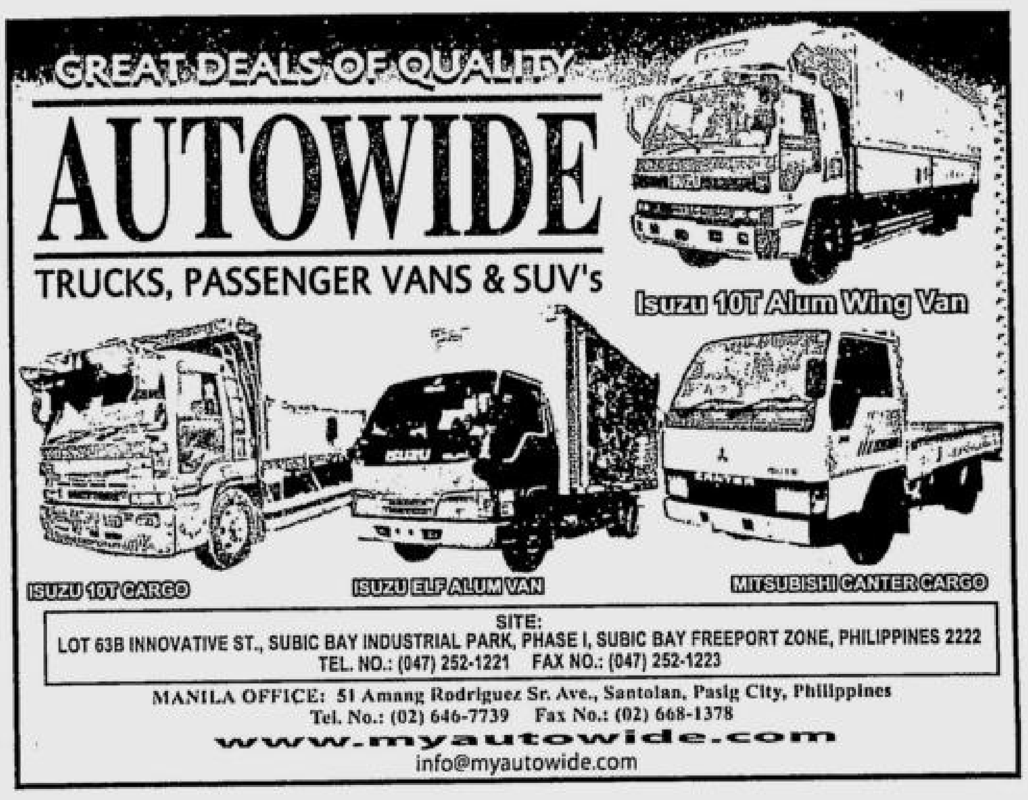
"I'm pretty excited to play in the PBA, but I still have one conference left with Welcoat," said the 23-year-old Washington. "I want my team to win a championship before I venture into the PBA."

Washington applied for the Aug. 7 draft along with Michael Holper, a 6-foot-6 forward who plays for Air Philippines in the PBL.

Holper, whose mother is a full-blooded Filipina, also presented a birth certificate, Filipino passport and the birth certificates of his parents.

At the age of two back in 1983, Washington and his parents left Zambales for Florida in the United States where he played college ball for Eckerd College, an NCAA Division II school.

The 23-year-old Holper, whose father is half-Filipino, was born and raised in the US. He played for NCAA Division I school San Diego State College.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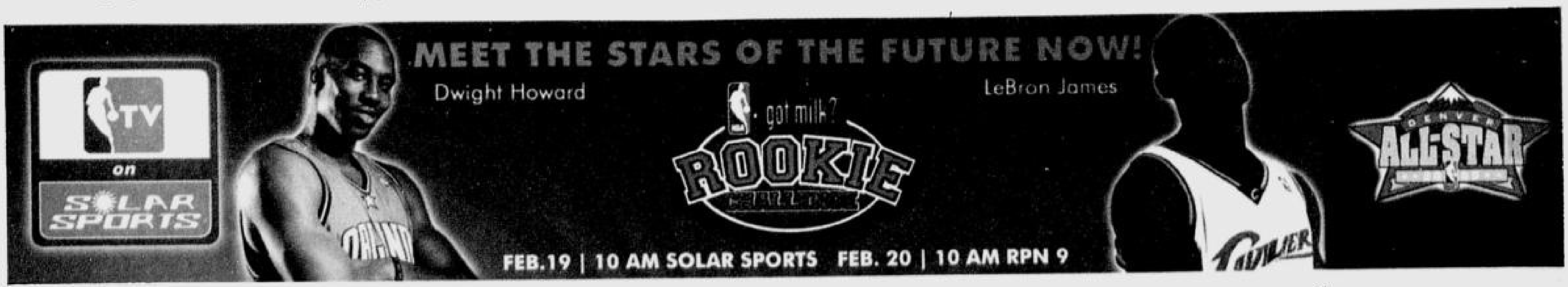
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Fonacier returns as Eagles battle Maroons

IT has been seven months since Larry Fonacier last suited up for the Ateneo varsity team. But the Eagles are hoping to turn to their main man once again when they battle the University of the Philippines in the Collegiate Championship Cup today at the FEU Gym.

Fonacier cut short his final UAAP season after tearing both the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) and medial collateral ligament (MCL) on his left knee in a game against the UP Maroons.

But the fifth-seeded UP, a last-minute replacement for UAAP champion La Salle Archers, will try to foil Fonacier's comeback when they gun for their third straight win at 4 p.m.

Also seeking their third straight victory are the University of Cebu Webmasters, who will battle the rookie-laden University of the East Warriors at 2 p.m.

The Webmasters, one of the two remaining contenders from the Visayas-Mindanao leg, outlasted the University of San Juan-Recoletos Jaguars, 81-70, last Tuesday.

GAMES TODAY (*FEU Gym*)
2 p.m.—UE vs University of Cebu
4 p.m.—UP vs Ateneo

Orville Saludsod, Lloyd Ortigueza and Kenneth Sesante have been starring for the Cebu contingent.

The UE Warriors, however, are hoping to end Webmasters' bid in this intercollegiate knockout tournament sponsored by Petron, Smart Communications, Addict Mobile, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, Air21, adidas, Glaxo SKF, Wilson and Pascual Laboratories.

Behind the impressive performances of rookies Mark Borboran and Bonifacio Custudio, the Warriors stunned San Beda's seasoned crew, 60-55, last Thursday.

The Eagles, whose third-place finish in the UAAP season earned them an automatic bye in the early rounds, are expected to lean on veterans LA Tenorio, Paolo Bugia and Magnum Membrere.

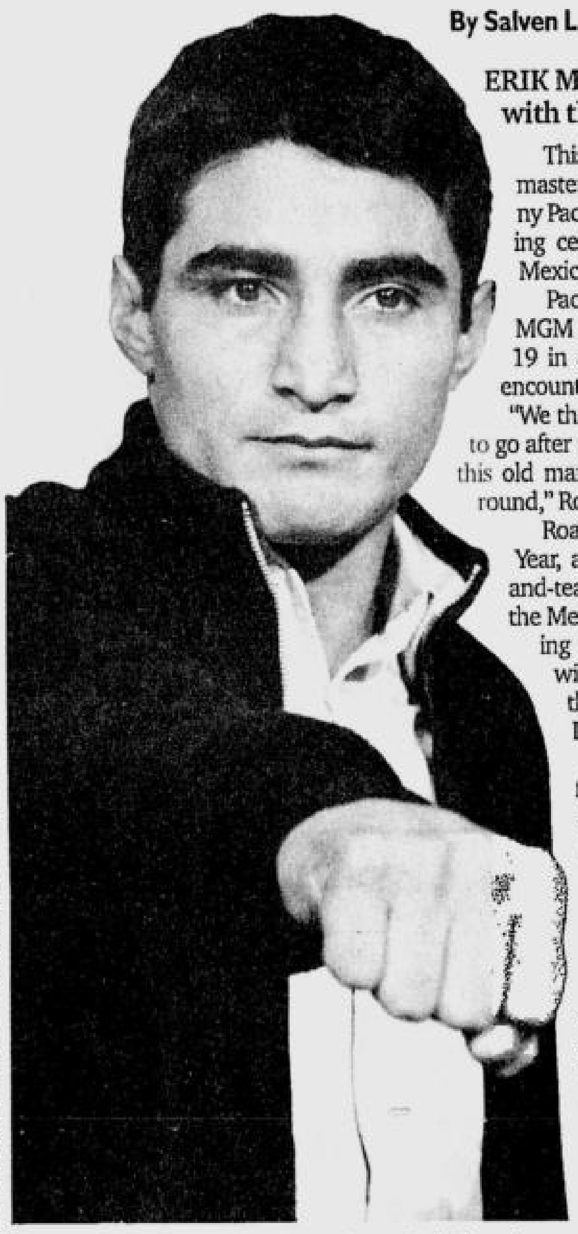
The UP Maroons, meanwhile, are coming off a 52-41 dismantling of the Letran Knights, with Toti Almeda, Josant Cervantes, Aby Santos and Nestor David delivering steady performances.

The winner of the UE-UC tiff will clash with NCAA runner-up University of Perpetual, while the winner of the Ateneo-UP match will face UAAP runner-up Far Eastern University on Tuesday.

In the first round, UP upset National Capital Region Athletic Association champion Emilio Aguinaldo College, 78-55, while UC blasted West Negros College, 109-83. *Jasmine W. Payo*

Morales old and weary, claims Pacquiao trainer

By Salven L. Lagumbay, *Contributor*


MORALES: My better artillery is my right hand. AP

ERIK Morales is "old" and, unlike vintage wine, he has turned stale with the years.

This is how Freddie Roach, the masterful trainer who molded Manny Pacquiao into a feared world boxing celebrity, views the 28-year-old Mexican legend.

Pacquiao and Morales clash at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas on March 19 in a much-awaited pay-per-view encounter hyped as "Bring It On."

"We think that's the key in the fight... to go after this guy's body early and make this old man fight every minute of every round," Roach bared.

Roach, the 2003 Trainer of the Year, also noted that Morales' wear-and-tear will definitely be a factor as the Mexican had been in very punishing wars like the famous trilogy with Marco Antonio Barrera and the hard-earned wins over Chi Injin and Paulie Ayala.

Roach's harshest statement for the March 19 fight came a day after Morales downgraded Pacquiao as a one-dimensional fighter.

In an interview with a Mexican news service Thursday, the former World Boxing Council champion in three separate divisions also emphasized he's not worried by the Pacquiao's highly touted left hand.

"In my past fights I already faced left-handed boxers and I beat them all by knockout, with the exception of Enrique Angeles whom I beat in 12 rounds... My better artillery is my right hand and that's what I will use against left-handed people," Morales said.

He added: "Pacquiao is dangerous because of his speed, but my superior strength will be the determining factor."

Morales, who bragged he has never lost to a left-hander, said Pacquiao cannot adapt to a fight situation.

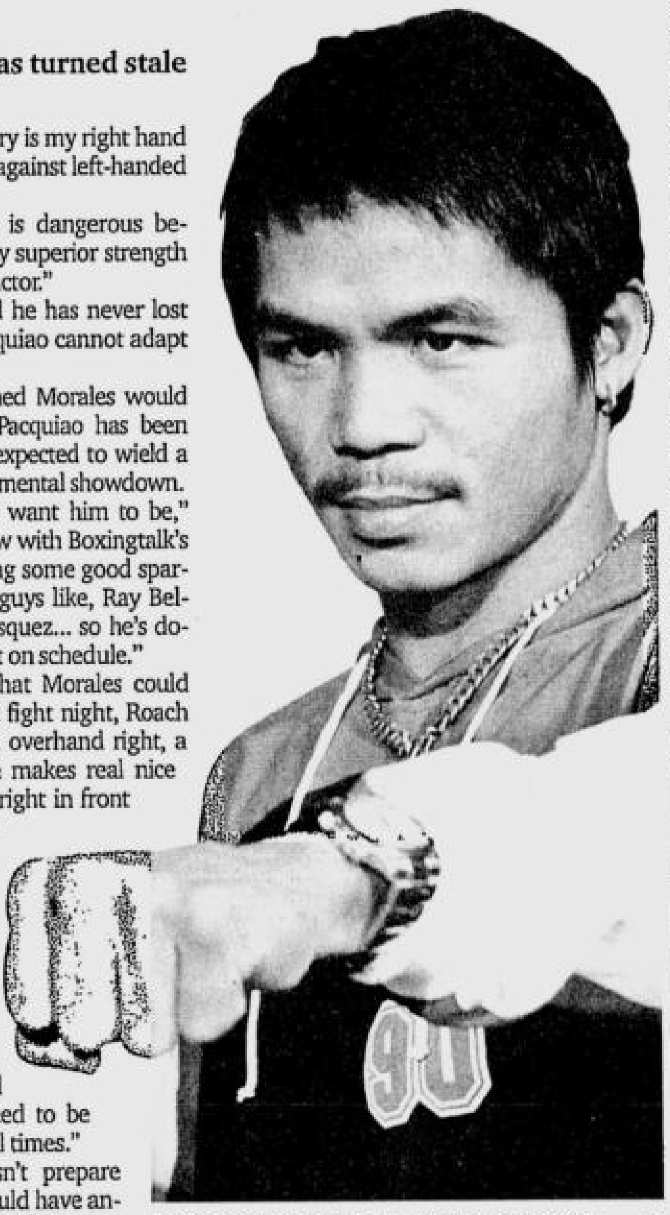
Roach, however, claimed Morales would be in for a surprise as Pacquiao has been peaking perfectly and is expected to wield a new weapon in the monumental showdown.

"He's right where we want him to be," said Roach in an interview with Boxingtalk's Brad Cooney. "He's getting some good sparring in with some good guys like, Ray Beltran, Orlando Salido, Vasquez... so he's doing really good. He's right on schedule."

As for the qualities that Morales could bring into the ring come fight night, Roach added: "He's got a good overhand right, a good left upper cut. He makes real nice moves. We can't just sit right in front of him, and be a target. We have to move side to side and use (Pacquiao's) hand and foot speed.

"Morales is a little slow... he's kind of got a long heavy jab and we have to take advantage of that and counter on that. We need to be aware of where he's at all times."

But if Morales doesn't prepare well for Pacquiao, he would have another bad night, Roach quipped.


PACQUIAO: Likely to go for the body first. AP

Primero tops killer Baguio bike race

NUEVA Ecija's Albert Primero orchestrated a three-man breakaway early on, then sustained his pace in the mountains passes of Naguilian and Kennon roads to rule the Baguio-to-Baguio 2005 Panagbenga Cycling Classic held on Valentine's Day.

PRIMERO

Primero, the 25-year-old member of the dreaded Pagcor Trade Team and last year's second runner-up in the Tour Pilipinas, peeled off from the main pack in the outskirts of Aringay, La Union to tow provincemate Bernard Luzon and new Pangasinan standout Sherwin Carrera.

Primero pocketed the P20,000 top prize plus trophy.

He also received P6,000 for coming first twice to the summit lines in Naguilian and Kennon roads. The Kennon road prizes were donated by Bureau of Immigration Commissioner Alipio F. Fernandez, Jr.

The Guimba-born Primero clocked six hours, 33 minutes and 32:15 seconds for the 205-kilometer race.

New Umingan pride Emil Pablo, member of the newly formed Pangasinan club Pitaki Boyz of Jazy Garcia, arrived two minutes 59 seconds off Primero to win P12,000, a trophy and P2,000 for crossing the Kennon summit in second place.

The 5-foot-11 Sherwin Carrera checked in third, good for P7,000 and a trophy, plus P3,000 for finishing second and third, respectively, at the two summit lines. Carrera was nine minutes adrift of Primero.

Another Guimba standout, Joel Calderon, also a member of the Pagcor team, came in fourth worth P5,000 plus P1,000 for finishing third at the Naguilian line.

Lone Bulacan participant Benito Lopez Jr. of Plaridel town landed fifth and earned P3,000.

Rounding out the top 10 who received P2,000 each were: Lloyd Reynante, sixth; Luzon, seventh; Augusto Benedicto, eight; Jefferson Valdez, ninth; Loreto Mandi, 10th.

Eleventh to 20th placers received P1,000 each. All finishers were awarded P500 each.

The event was held in conjunction with the celebration of the 2005 Panagbenga (flower) festival and sponsored by the Baguio City government headed by the city's chief executive Braulio Yaranon.

Manila, Iloilo, 2 other cities vie for Palaro

By Marc Anthony Reyes

AT LEAST four cities are willing to host the Palarong Pambansa this year but the bid winner must have the Games' most vital requirement—a fully operational sports facility.

The cities of Iligan, Iloilo, Tacloban and Manila are the frontrunners for hosting the Palaro, which took a leave last year to make way for the country's campaign in the Athens Olympics.

But Bacolod Rep. Monico Puentevella said that with limited budget this year, the host city must have a sports complex that will not require much repairs.

The Palaro normally attracts about 7,000 student-athletes from all over the country.

"We can't afford to make repairs on the venues anymore, so the more prepared the sports complex is, the better," said Puentevella.

That put Iligan up front because of its proximity to the world-class Mindanao Civic Center in Tubod, Lanao del Norte, site of the Palaro's last staging in 2003.

The P500 million Tubod venue also made a bid to host the 2005 Southeast Asian Games.

ARROYO

PUENTEVELLA

Puentevella, however, believes that Manila is out of the race and that either the Visayas or Mindanao has the inside track to host the event. The usual rotation, however, calls for the Games to be held in Luzon this year.

This means that since Mindanao hosted the Games the previous year, the Palaro will return to Luzon, before going back to the Visayas the following year and then back to Luzon again.

But the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex will be undergoing a massive face-lift for the 2005 Southeast Asian Games and may not be ready in time for the Palaro.

Nevertheless, Puentevella said it is up to the Department of Education's regional directors to decide on the venue. DepEd regained organizational rights of the Palaro this year from the Philippine Sports Commission, which had run the event the past few years.

President Arroyo has made the Palaro possible this year by approving the release of P20 million from the President's Social Fund.

Puentevella said the President's donation was her "Valentine's gift" to student-athletes who are anticipating the revival of the Games, which cater to elementary and high school students.

Milica

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

THERE is a lady from Orchard who stands out in the 42nd Southern Ladies Open at Pueblo de Oro in Cagayan de Oro City.

That's as far as I am concerned, of course.

No, she's not leading the 54-hole tournament that drew almost 80 female par busters from all over. She's not even close enough to the crown that seemed set to be captured by Jayvie Agojo before the day ends today.

She's not, by any stretch of imagination, world-class as far as her playing skills are concerned. That's why she plays in Class D, the lowest bracket in the tournament put up yearly by the National Golf Association of the Philippines.

Teaching pros would make a killing just giving her tips on how to grip the club properly.

No, she does not swing like a snowman.

Nor does she look like Jim Furyk on the back swing.

But Annika Sorenstam would frown on her swing.

But to me, Milica Ivanovic is a winner. That's as far as my yardstick of what a true winner is.

Gosh, how she is well loved by Alice Andrada, the grand lady of Philippine golf.

"She's always fun to be with," said Alice of Milica. "Very intelligent and wise to ways of the world."

It is not because Milica has traveled from Laoag to Tawi-Tawi that's why I list her in my book as a winner, although that is no mean feat, considering that she's a foreigner. How many of us have already done that?

"It's been my dream to travel around the Philippines on board a bicycle," Milica said.

In her backyard in her house not far from the Orchard Golf Club in Dasmariñas, Cavite, are three mango trees—"two kalabao variety and one pico."

Oh, how she loves mangoes.

"One mango tree of mine had bore thousands of fruits during one season," said Milica, whose life is as colorful as, say, Jennifer Lopez's.

"If J-Lo was married two hours and then she got divorced on the third hour of her marriage, then she wins," said Milica. "I was married once and within 24 hours of my marriage, I had my divorce."

That marriage was with Nicholas Stoodley, once an icon in the garments world, who once put up a basketball team in the '70s that won a Conference title in the PBA.

"I don't know where he is now although last I heard, he was staying in his house in Tagaytay," said Milica.

But the part in Milica's life that I like best is her ties with Jane Asher, the former girl friend of ex-Beatle, Sir Paul McCartney.

"Jane is a dear friend of mine since we were in kindergarten," said Milica, who said she was of Croatian descent but who grew up in London and holds a British passport. "I had brushes with Paul McCartney when they were sweethearts back in the Sixties."

Milica said she also knew Peter (of Peter & Gordon fame) pretty well. (Peter is Jane Asher's brother.).

"Peter also handled James Taylor," said Milica, who remembers, quite sadly, that Peter's father, a doctor, had disappeared one day and he was never heard of since.

"Jane and Peter were part of a brood of seven," said Milica. "They were quite a huge but happy family, until their father disappeared."

One time, when Milica was working in an office in London, Paul McCartney, already a very famous Beatle, came by. While trying to strike up a conversation with Sir Paul, Milica got the shock of her life.

"A secretary must be standing up while talking to me," Milica quoted Sir Paul McCartney as having said to her.

"Maybe he was just joking?" I said.

"No, he was not," Milica said. "One would smile after saying a joke. But that's no big deal. I wouldn't bother myself with such triviality."

She still considers Jane Asher "a dear friend."

"Jane now owns a cake shop in London that is named simply as Jane Asher Cakes," said Milica, who said Jane Asher was never a fashion model. "She was a child actress. If you see her, give my regards to her."

I will, Milica.

***

FASTBREAK. Here's to Boyet & Vangie, who will tie the knot today. May your union be as endless as the sea, as mighty as a narra tree and as solid as the core of a golf ball.

SOUTHERN LADIES

Agojo virtual champion with second straight 66

By Al S. Mendoza

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Jayvie Agojo, whose puny appearance defies her killer instinct on and off the tee, scored a rare second straight 6-under-par 66 yesterday to virtually win the 42nd Southern Ladies Open at Pueblo de Oro here.

The 18-year-old Agojo made seven birdies anew against a lone bogey, leaving the field practically fighting for crumbs as she appeared set to win it with her imposing 12-point margin.

"I am really surprised at the way I am playing," said Agojo of her back-to-back 66s. "It's like a joke."

Only 18 holes separate Agojo from claiming the Southern Ladies Open on her first try, leading 1999 champion Carmelette Villaroman by 12 points in the Molave scoring system that gives four points to a birdie, three to a par and two to a bogey.

"No, I'm not going for Heidi's (Chua) record," said Agojo. "I will just play my normal game tomorrow and if it should happen that I would set a new record, I'd be very grateful."

As a rookie in 2000, Chua, now a professional, won this tournament with a 12-under-par total to establish the biggest winning margin in the annual tournament that was begun in 1963 by the National Golf Association of the Philippines.

Villaroman, bucking a pollen-triggered eye allergy, shot a 71 and, adding her opening-day 73, totaled 108 points, 12 points behind Agojo's tournament-leading 120 in the series supported by DHL Worldwide Express, WWW Express, Petron Corp., Gopez Corp., Admiral Luisito Fernandez (Ret.), DPC Yellow Pages, Hans Brumann Jeweller, Master Sports Corp., Globe Telecommunications, HSBC-Mabuhay Miles Visa, Rep. Lala Santos (1st District, Cotabato), Danny Pascual of Western Engineering and Xavier Estates, the official hotel.

Defending champion Lora Roberto made a 73=107 and dropped to a tie for third place with Anya Tanpinco (69=107) and Korean Kim Cho Hui (72-107) in the series that drew nearly 80 female golfers from all over the land.

Like in the first round, Agojo, who won the Philippine Ladies Open in January at Manila Golf Club, also had missed eagles on the two par-5s—7 and 17—to settle for birdies.

She scorched the back nine with five birdies, including three straight from the 15th, as she displayed near-flawless putting.

"Nice putting today," said Agojo. "Feel *na* feel."

Scores: Championship-120 Agojo; 108 Villaroman; 107 Roberto, Tanpinco, Kim; 102 De Guzman; 99 Ikeda, Minoza; 97 Guiogulo; 96 Locsin; 94 Yu; 89 Cho; 83 Ablerra; 82 Unchuan; 72 N. Guiogulo; 43 Song.

Class A-88 Godio; 81 Chua; 80 Tabuena; 79 Garcia; 76 Roque; 75 Badong; 73 I. Garcia; 70 Minoza; 68 Lewington; 60 siguan; 56 Martinez; 52 San Miguel; 28 Agustin.

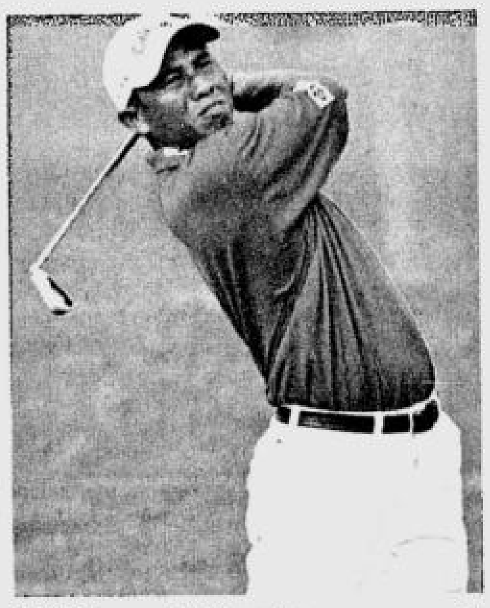
Class B-75 Lui; 74 Orimaco 69 dimson; 68 Tan, Woo; 65 Solitaria; Menes 63; 62 Duque; 59 Arevalo' 58 Cu; 56 Arellano; 53 Mendoza; 50 roque; 48 Geollegue; 41 Leonen.

Class C-65 Andrada; 62 Del Rosario; 62 Veloso; 58 Lopez, Roa; 54 Mok.

Class D-48 Perez, 46 Villar, 44 Villamel.

AGOJO: Ahead by 12 shots over her closest pursuers. ROGER MARGALLO

Jaidee stays ahead by 2



JAIDEE moves to 14-under. AFP

KUALA LUMPUR—Defending champion Thongchai Jaidee of Thailand spoiled Thomas Bjorn's 34th birthday celebrations with three late birdies to finish two strokes clear in the Malaysian Open second round on Friday.

Thongchai again showed his liking for the Saujana course in Kuala Lumpur with a six-under-par round of 66 to move to 14 under in the co-sanctioned Asian and European Tour event.

Bjorn, seeking his eighth tour victory, fired nine birdies in an eight-under-par 64.

Thailand's Prom Meesawat (65) and Sweden's Henrik Stenson (64) were next best on 11 under par, with Spain's Miguel Angel Jimenez (67) and Sweden's Peter Gustafsson (65) tied in fifth spot on nine under, two ahead of Ireland's Padraig Harrington and Gary Murphy.

Filipino Angelo Que, the Vietnam Open champion, bounced back from a 73 in the opening round with an eagle-spiked two-under-par 70 to safely make the cut.

He was among those at 52nd spot with a 143 total.

Que highlighted his round with an eagle on the 13th hole. He also had two birdies and the same number of bogeys.

Thongchai sealed his victory last year when he aced the 16th and birdied the last hole and the 34-year-old virtually repeated that effort on day two. He hit the flagstick at 16, drilled a punch shot to within a foot of the 17th hole and chipped to two feet at the last for the easiest of birdies.

"I saw Thomas Bjorn before I teed off and I congratulated him on his score but then I had to play my own game, which is always fairways, greens and putts," Thongchai told reporters.

Denmark's Bjorn, ranked 27th in the world, rekindled hopes of ending a winless drought of more than two years. *Reuters*

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Amonsot yields to Indon fighter

FILIPINO Ceasar Amonsot bowed to Indonesian Simson Butar Butar via technical knockout in the fifth round last Thursday at the RCTI Studio in Jakarta.

Reports had it that Amonsot, from Tagbilaran, Bohol, had Butar on the verge of a knockout in the third frame, but the Indon regained his composure to escape further punishment.

Butar Butar then caught Amonsot with a crisp right to the head, causing the ALA Boy to wobble. The Indon referee then quickly stepped in to stop the fight.

Reportedly, Butar Butar was in bad shape in the third round, but the referee let the fight to continue.

Amonsot's record dipped to 7 wins, 1 loss with 6 knockouts while Butar Butar improved to 5 wins, 2 losses with 5 KOs.
Salven L. Lagumbay

Asean Para Games set

PREPARATIONS are in full swing for the staging of the 3rd Asean Para Games in Manila a week after the 23rd Southeast Asian Games from Nov. 27 to Dec. 5.

PSC Commissioner Michael I. Barredo, concurrent Papgoc (Philippine Asean Para Games Organizing Committee) chair, said yesterday that technical, coaching and classification courses as well as judo and goal ball lectures have been lined up.

Italian Bruno Carmeni, the International Paralympic Committee judo coordinator, will give judo lectures on March 4-5 at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex while Chin Yee Tee and Jaher Hussen will hold goal ball lectures at the Philsports audio visual room on March 16-18.

Philspada secretary general Emmanuel Penson also bared tune-up games for the athletes.

Among these are the Manila Jaycee Cup-8th Phil. Wheelchair Basketball League on March 6 to April 3 at the Philsports complex, the MMDA-Philspada Wheelaton on March 13, the 2nd Philspada national goalball championships on March 17-18 at the Philsports and the Vismin Para Games qualifyig tournament on April 7-10 in Zamboanga City.

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(Maximum of 160 characters)
*Metro Manila winners can call Jane at 8978808. Provincial winners can text: inquirer ad name/city/mailing address to 2207 or 283 as their prizes will be mailed to them

Garnett dominates as Wolves lick Cavs

MINNEAPOLIS, Minnesota—After Wally Szczerbiak offered a boost from the bench, Minnesota starter Kevin Garnett outdueled LeBron James in the stretch as the Timberwolves posted a 94-88 National Basketball Association victory on Thursday.

Szczerbiak scored 26 points and Garnett had eight of his 20 in the final seven minutes to give the Timberwolves a win heading into the midseason All-Star break.

Szczerbiak made 9-of-15 shots to power a huge effort from the reserves, who outscored Cleveland's bench by a staggering 55-6.

Fred Hoiberg scored 13 points and Eddie Griffin added nine and 10 rebounds off Minnesota's bench and overcompensated for a poor night from the starters.

Garnett was the only Minnesota starter to score in double figures and added 18 rebounds, six assists and three blocks.

He made virtually every big play down the stretch as he outdueled fellow All-Star James.

Garnett had a finger roll and jumper on consecutive possessions, giving Minnesota the lead for good at 83-81 with 3:43 to play.

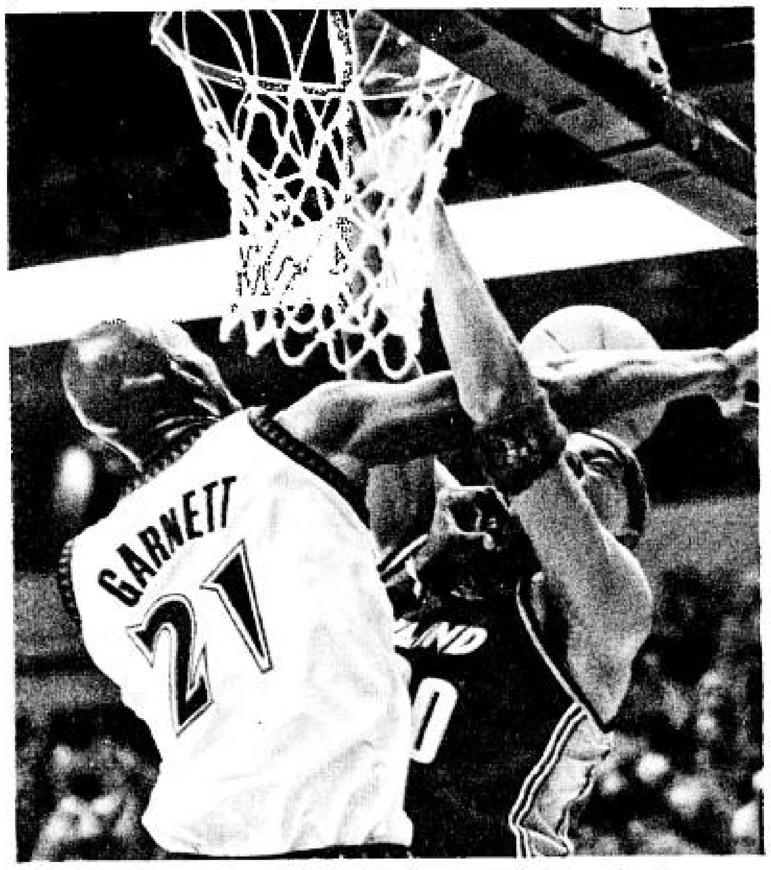
Szczerbiak added a jumper 35 seconds later. James made two free throws, but Latrell Sprewell answered with a follow shot, then blocked a shot by Eric Snow.

Griffin was fouled and split the free throws. Garnett somehow got the offensive rebound on the miss, then pegged the ball off Cleveland's Drew Gooden to save the possession. That led to Szczerbiak's two free throws for a 90-83 lead at the 1:27 mark.

James made a layup and Jeff McInnis sank 1-of-2 foul shots to cut the deficit to 90-86 with 1:08 remaining before Garnett made a short fadeaway jumper with 49 seconds to go. After James made two free throws, Garnett sealed it with a no-look pass between his legs to a cutting Griffin, whose layup provided the final margin.

James had 26 points, eight assists and seven rebounds for the Cavaliers, who had won four of their last five games. The 20-year-old phenom went to the locker room with exhaustion in the fourth quarter but later returned.

AFP



TIMBERWOLVES' Garnett (21) blocks Cavaliers Drew Gooden during the second half of their NBA game. REUTERS

Mavericks shade Suns on the road

TORONTO—Michael Finley nailed 33 points and Josh Howard added a career-high 30 to power the Dallas Mavericks to a 119-113 road win over the Phoenix Suns on Thursday.

The defeat meant the Suns missed out on a chance to take sole possession of the best record in the NBA standings heading into the weekend all-star break.

Dirk Nowitzki had 16 points and 16 rebounds for the Mavericks, stretching their winning run to four games.

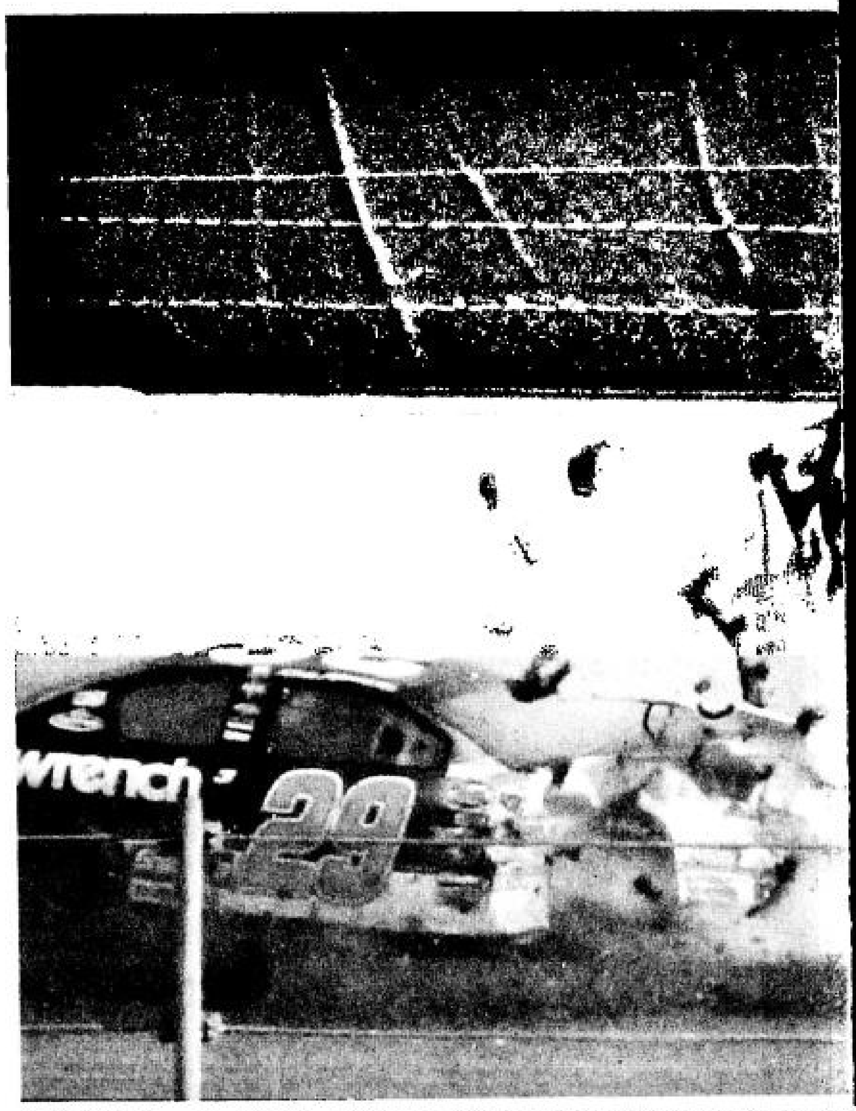
Amare Stoudemire poured in 31 points and snared 12 rebounds for the Suns while Steve Nash, who moved to the Suns from the Mavericks in the off-season, chipped in with 19 points and 11 assists.

The loss allowed the idle San Antonio Spurs to move into first place with the league's best record, 41-12, half a game ahead of the Suns. *AP*

Okafor nixes Rookie Challenge

CHARLOTTE Bobcats rookie forward Emeka Okafor announced Thursday that he will not participate in the Rookie Challenge during All-Star weekend because of a lingering ankle sprain.

Okafor first suffered the injury against the Los Angeles Lakers on Jan. 30 and was quickly put on the injured list and sidelined for five games. He then re-injured the ankle against Miami on Feb. 11. It was his first game after being activated. *Reuters*



NASCAR driver Rusty Wallace (2) goes airborne after colliding with Kevin Har Daytona 500 qualifying race Thursday afternoon at the Daytona International

Stewart avoids crash

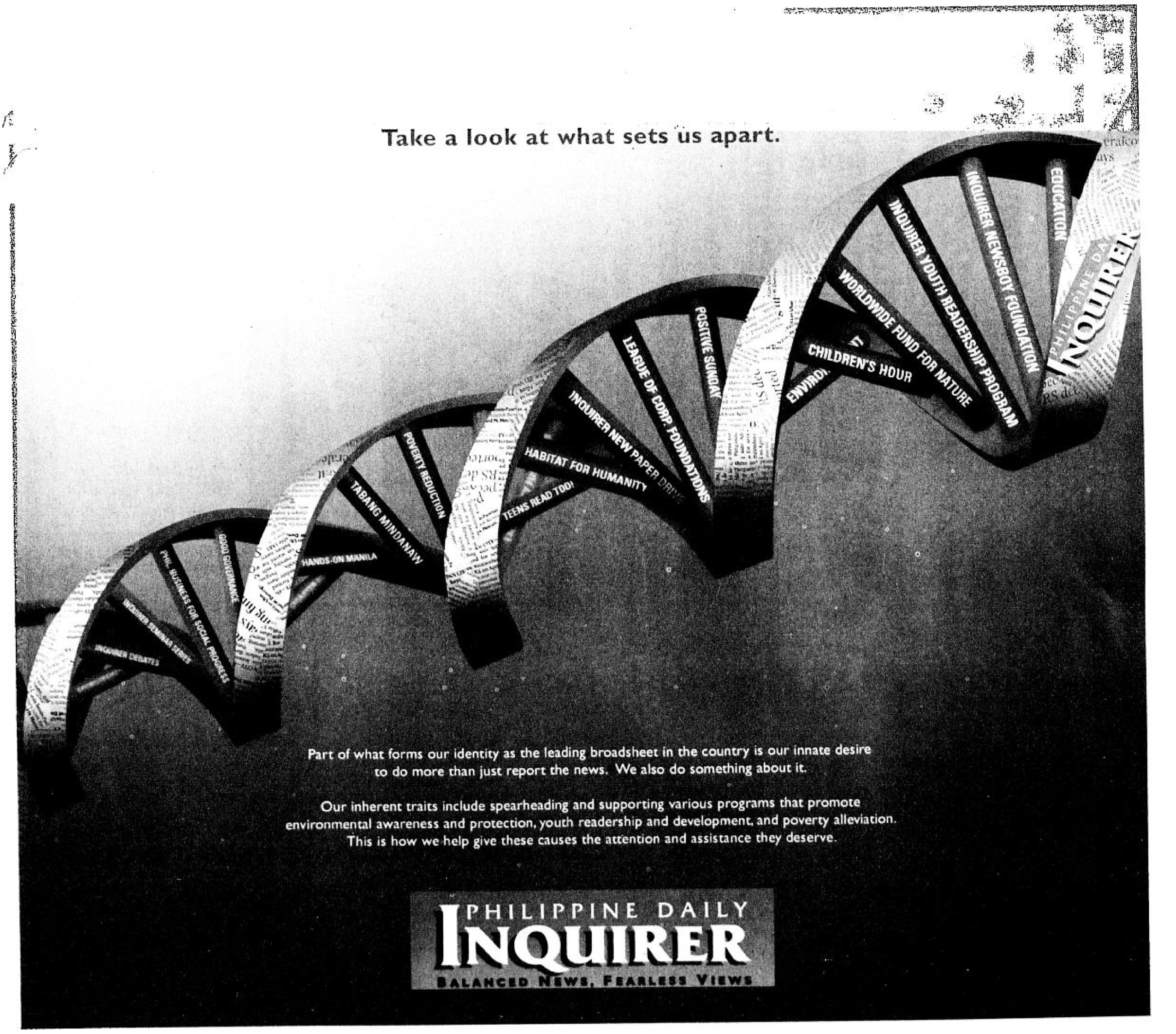
DAYTONA BEACH, Fla.—Tony Stewart avoided a big crash and captured the second Gatorade Duel at Daytona event at the Daytona International Speedway. The No. 20 Home Depot Chevrolet driver took the checkered flag 0.183 seconds ahead of runner-up Jeff Burton.

It was the first "Duel" win of Stewart's career. He led the final 12 laps after starting 13th on the grid.

"Thanks to all the guys on this Home Depot team," said Stewart. "The Monte Carlo was good today. We were a little bit tight and we need to work on it before Sunday, but we've got a pretty good race car obviously." Meanwhile, the story of the nightcap was the accident on lap 36.

It was started when Kevin Harvick tried to "bumpdraft" Jimmie Johnson in the middle of the turn 2 and sent the leader spinning. Joe Nemechek, Mark Martin, Rusty Wallace and Dave Blaney got collected in the mass of bent sheetmetal.

"From the start of the race, Harvick tried to give me a flat," said an irate Johnson, who led a race-high 20 laps. "He tried to bumpdraft in the center of the turn. I guess all those years of watching TV and worshipping racing like he says he did, he didn't watch much of it to realize you're not supposed to bumpdraft in a turn.



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vick (29) and Dave Blaney (07) during the second Gatorade Duel 150-mile Speedway in Daytona Beach, Fla. AP

, tops Daytona race

"It's a shame, he just tore up six or seven good race cars.

I hope that (Richard) Childress either fires him or Nascar does something about this, because this is ridiculous. Absolutely ridiculous." "He's just driving stupid," said an equally unhappy Nemechek. "He'll get it back. It was totally uncalled for what happened out there. Everybody's racing and he's trying to turn people around in the corner." After looking over his mangled race car, Martin was asked if he could possibly win his final Daytona 500 in his backup car; "Absolutely not! was his answer." Kevin Lepage, Martin Truex Jr. and Scott Riggs completed the top five.

In the race within the race, Truex Jr. and Lepage were the top-two finishers of nine drivers who were not already qualified for the Daytona 500 and earned themselves a place on Sunday's starting grid.

Dale Jarrett will start on the pole for Sunday's 47th running of the Daytona 500 which is scheduled to begin at 2 p.m. (et). Johnson will start on the outside of Jarrett assuming he can still use today's car.

Michael Waltrip and Stewart will start in row two, their reward for today's victories. Meanwhile Dale Earnhardt Jr., the defending Daytona 500 champion, and Jeff Burton will start in row three. *Reuters*

Vintage Federer routs Swiss teen

ROTTERDAM, Netherlands—Roger Federer was once again in vintage form as he swept aside Swiss teenager Stanislas Wawrinka, 6-1 6-4, in the second round of the World Indoor Tournament on Thursday.

Former Australian Open champion Thomas Johansson continued his resurgence by outgunning his in-form namesake Joachim Johansson, 6-4, 6-4.

Ranked 128 places above his compatriot, top seed Federer showed no signs of the jitters evident during his opening match as he reached the last eight for the sixth successive time.

The win also put him one match away from a possible semifinal showdown with Britain's Tim Henman, who beat Federer in the quarterfinals here last year.

Third seed Henman scurried into the last eight this time with a clinical 6-4 6-1 win over Frenchman Michael Llodra.

Qualifier Wawrinka, who carved out the biggest win of his career in the previous round when he upset France's Sebastien Grosjean, barely knew what had hit him in a first set against Federer lasting just 25 minutes.

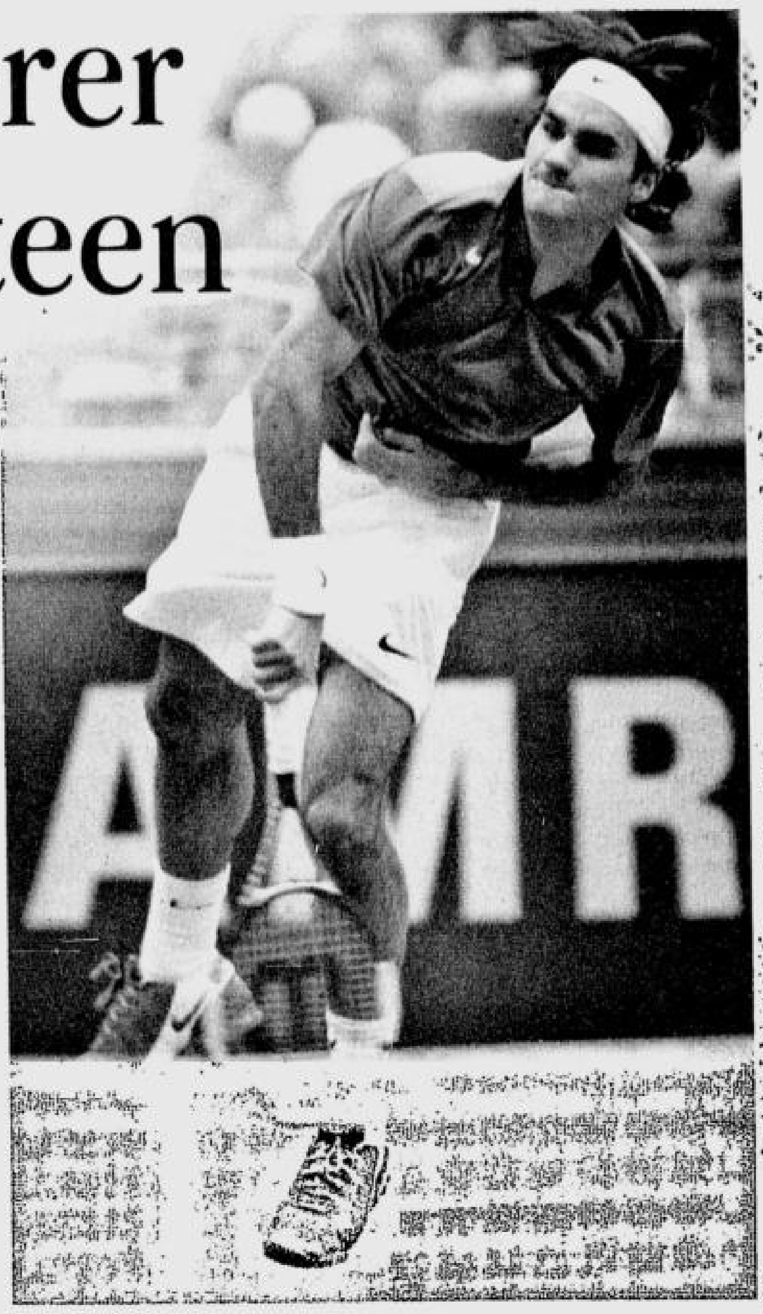
"It was awkward for both of us. We practise quite a lot together and then suddenly a match comes along and you have to switch mentally as every point counts," Federer said.

"You want to show the youngster that you are the better player and that you deserve the number one ranking.

"He was nervous and I took advantage of that. Leaving today as a loser wouldn't have been very nice for me." The second set looked to be heading the same way when Wawrinka was again broken at the start but, cheered on by a boisterous crowd, the 19-year-old found his footing and even earned a break point when Federer was serving for the match.

After handing Wawrinka the chance to get back on level terms by slamming the ball wide of an open court, Federer restored order by winning the next three points for the match.

British number one Henman was left twiddling his thumbs in the locker room for more than three hours as Sjeng Schalken attempted to keep alive Dutch interest in the tournament with a three-set encounter against Croatian Ivan Ljubicic. *Reuters*



FEDERER serves to countryman Stanislas Wawrinka during the ABN AMRO tennis tournament in Rotterdam. AFP

Mauresmo sweeps aside Pierce

BRUSSELS—Top seed Amelie Mauresmo swept aside French compatriot Mary Pierce, 6-4, 6-1, in the second round of the Antwerp Diamond Games tournament on Thursday.

"My game is becoming more and more aggressive but at the same time I am able to remain calm and focused," said Mauresmo, who meets Switzerland's Patty Schnyder in Friday's quarterfinals.

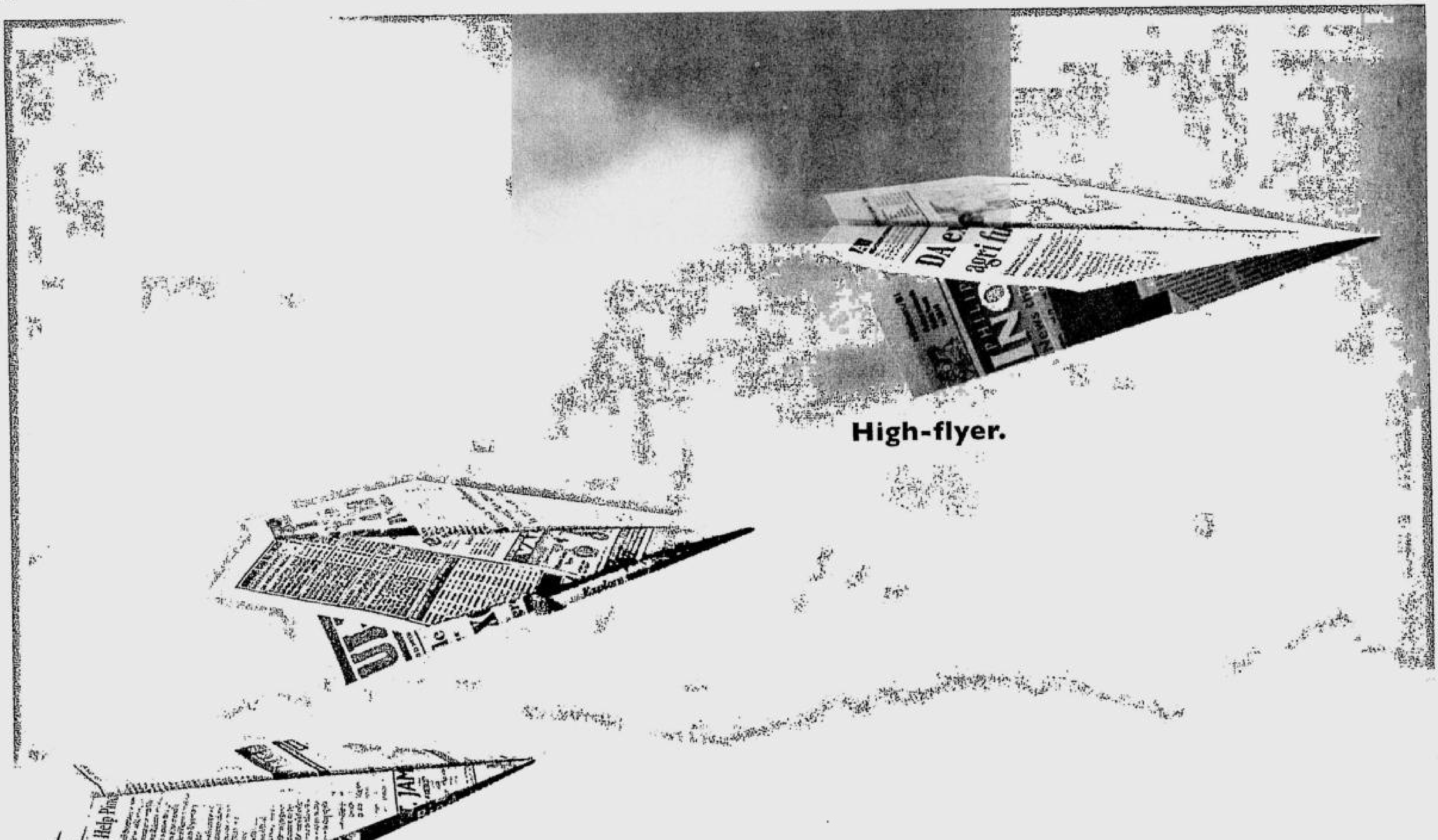
"I know that tennis can be disappointing but I am only thinking about the good things that it can bring," added Mauresmo, who often suffers from nervousness in big matches.

French Open champion and second seed Anastasia Myskina also advanced, but she was forced to dig deep to overcome France's Tatiana Golovin, 6-3, 6-7, 6-4.

"It was a tight match," Myskina said. "But I expected no less. Tatiana is a very good player." Myskina will be hoping for an easier contest in the last eight against Slovenian qualifier and doubles specialist Katarina Srebotnik, who saved five match points in her 4-6, 6-1, 7-6 victory over Russia's Anna Chakvetadze.

Earlier, Australian Alicia Molik, a quarterfinalist at last month's Australian Open where she beat Venus Williams, battled past Bulgarian Magdalena Maleeva, 4-6, 6-2, 7-6.

The fourth seed next faces unseeded Czech Klara Koukalova, who eased into the last eight with a 6-4 6-3 victory over Luxembourg's Claudine Schaul. *Reuters*



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Santo Tomas batters nip UP, clinch crown

SANTO TOMAS survived a stubborn defending champion University of the Philippines, 8-7, Thursday at the Rizal ballpark to clinch the men's baseball title of the UAAP's Season 67 via a rare 10-game sweep of the eliminations.

The title was the Tigers' 16th, making them the winningest baseball team in the league.

Jon Jon Robles, named the season's most valuable player, struck out two batters at the bottom ninth inning, after yielding an RBI single to shortstop Jessie Natanauan that sent home Roswald Palacol, 8-7.

UP fell to 6-4 and will dispute second place with National University, which also clinched its sixth win in 10 matches at the expense of La Salle, 9-8, Thursday. The UP-NU tussle is set at 1 p.m. tomorrow, also at the Rizal diamond.

Ateneo beat Adamson, 10-6, and although both teams finished with similar 3-7 win-loss cards, the Eagles bagged fourth place by virtue of a superior run-quotient.

That almost rattled the Tigers, but, was unruffled.

"Sinabi ko sa kanila na huwag mag-panic, *'wag masyadong mag-alala,"* said coach Jeffrey Santiago, the country's finest hurler in the early 1980s. *"Nag*-collapse *ang* pitcher *ng* UP *pagdating ng* end game," said Santiago.

BIG SWEEP: The unbeaten Tigers celebrate their title romp after overcoming the gritty Maroons.

Eagles tackle Tigers for football title

ATENEO de Manila's booters gun for their second straight UAAP football title tomorrow when they clash with University of Santo Tomas at 3 p.m. at the Ateneo field in Quezon City.

Coach Ompong Merida's Ateneans are way ahead of the UST Tigers with 23 points on seven wins, two draws and a loss.

UST, mentored by Nonoy Carpio, has 16 points on three wins and seven draws, but it has the distinction of battling Ateneo to draws—0-0 and 1-1—in their two previous meetings.

UST actually tied for second place with Far Eastern University with identical 16 points, but earned a shot at Ateneo for having a better goal difference, 7-3.

Coach Hans Smit's La Salle squad shoots for its third straight women's crown against University of the Philippines earlier at 1 p.m.

The DLSU belles have 19 points on six wins, one draw and one loss while UP has 16 points on five wins, one draw and three defeats.

The Diliman girls inflicted La Salle's lone loss, 1-0, in the first round.

Team and individual awards for both men and women will follow the two matches. Individual prizes will be given to the most valuable player, best defender, best goalkeeper, best midfielder and highest scorer both for men and women.

FEU, University of the East, La Salle and UP finished from third to sixth in the men's division while UST, Ateneo and FEU ranked third to fifth in the women's group, respectively.

The Blue Eagles strengthened their bid to retain the men's crown when they shellacked UP, 3-1, Wednesday afternoon.

Jose Angelo Peralta (10th), Ignatius Michael Ingles (21st) and Mark Peterson Villon (86th) scored for the Eagles.

Meliton Pelayo scored both goals for UST, which nailed second spot via a 2-1 win over UE also Wednesday. The Tigers are 3-7-0 in the two-round eliminations.

In the other game, FEU blanked La Salle, 3-0.

GAMES TOMORROW (*Ateneo Field*)
1 p.m.—DLSU vs UP (women)
3 p.m.—Ateneo vs UST (men)

SPORTSWATCH

NCAA beach volleyball fires off today

BEACH volleyball fanatics are in for a treat when the 3rd NCAA beach volleyball tournament takes center stage anew starting at 8 a.m. today at the La Salle Greenhills court. Presented by Nieva with co-presentors Konika and Accel and organized by Sports Connection, the tournament will run until Feb. 27. The event is on its last year as an NCAA demonstration sport and will be included in the league's roster of official sports next season. Organizers are optimistic that the tournament will again be a big hit among outdoor sports loving Filipinos. The 3rd NCAA beach volleyball tournament is sponsored by Konica-Minolta, Speedo, Netopia, Munky, Phoenix One, Mikasa, Red Bull, Shakey's and 91.5 Energy FM.

Chi Injin title fight on 'Main Event'

THE SECOND title defense of WBC featherweight champion Chi Injin against WBA Youth champion Tommy Browne of Australia will be telecast on the top-rating weekly boxing show "Main Event" at 1 p.m. tomorrow over RPN 9. Also featured will be highlights of the recent heavyweight battle between Malik Scott, who is managed by Shelly Finkel, the new manager of Ring Magazine featherweight champion Manny Pacquiao and veteran Lamont Brewster. Chi is considered a potential future opponent of Pacquiao and with international promoter Murad Muhammad given the right to negotiate fights for the WBC champion in the US, it is likely that he will get the big opportunities that he hasn't had before. Chi who trained in Cebu City for the Browne title fight is managed by the South Korean businessman-sportsman Kusung Lee.

Rookie Challenge kicks off NBA All-Stars

SOLAR sports will broadcast the 2005 NBA All-Star Weekend starting today with the Rookie Challenge kicking off this year's mid-season extravaganza in Denver. Take a glimpse of the fast-rising stars of tomorrow as sophomores LeBron James of the Cleveland Cavaliers and Denver's very own Carmelo Anthony test the mettle of this year's top rookies in the Got Milk? Rookie Challenge to be aired live beginning at 10 a.m. On its sixth year, the encouhter pitting the NBA's rookies against the sophomores will also be replayed on RPN-9 tomorrow at 10 a.m. as it serves as an appetizer to the East versus West NBA All-Star Game on Feb. 21. It will be shown live on Solar Sports and RPN-9 at 9 in the morning with a replay at 7:30 p.m. over RPN-9.

Pearl Darts Classic resumes

THE SECOND leg of the Pearl Darts Classic 2005 monthly darts series resumes at 8:45 p.m. today at the Pearl Billiards-Darts and Bar at the 4th floor of Pearl Plaza Mall, along Quirino Avenue, Tambo, Parañaque City. The tournament serves as a tune-up for participants in the Darts Council of the Philippines Metro Manila Darts Circuit second leg slated at the Pool Spot Cafe in San Juan on Feb. 26-27 and the much-awaited Philmasters 05 in Baguio City on March 4-6. The Pearl event stakes a cash prize of P10,000. Also supporting the series are San Miguel Beer and Bevida Mineral Water. Mode of play is classified doubles (no two rated players and/or lady darters drawn as pair), KOC/701 double knockout. Entry fee is P125 per player. For inquiries, call 851-9272, 851-9264.

National cycling pool get support

THE NATIONAL cycling team will continue using Vittoria road tires and GEAX mountain bike tires courtesy of Elixir Trading for its training for the 23rd Southeast Asian Games. The support was reaffirmed by Leo Magaway, president of Elixir Trading, which has supported the national cycling team for the past four years. The Integrated Cycling Federation of the Philippines (PhilCycling) board welcomed Elixir Trading's assistance. The same brands of tires, according to Magaway, would also be used in the SEA Games proper by the national cyclists, who have vowed to go all out in their quest for a 12-gold sweep in the road, mountain bike and velodrome events.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TV GUIDE
Saturday February 19, 2005

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Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2	Entertainment Konek		Reach Out		Y Speak		Search for the Dance Idols		TV Patrol	Magandang Gabi Bayan		Star Cinema Presents			Home Along The Airport		Kontrobersyal		Sports Unlimited
NBN	Value Vision		Value Vision			GSIS Member's Hour		Yan Ang Pinoy		Gold & Glory In Grace		Search For The 1st Tanduay Billiards Player		To Be Announced			Business & Leisure		
ABC 5	Smart TV	The Basketball Show		Soccer Showdown		Loren		Diretsahan		Viva Box Office				Sing Galing		Maverick & Ariel	ABC Cinema		
GMA 7	Startalk			Wish Ko Lang		Wag Kukurap	Pinoy Pop Superstar	Bitoy's Funniest Videos			Extra Challenge		Imbestigador		Idol Ko Si Kap			Tales Of Horror	
RPN 9			Biyahong Langit	JR News	Kids TV	Hanapbuhay Overseas		Isumbong mo kay Tulfo		7 Days		JAG		2002 Laureus Sports Award				Money Talks	
IBC 13		Home Shopping Network		Japan Video Topic		Home Shopping Network		Amerika Atbp.		V League				Bitag		In This Corner		Ugnayang Pambansa	
Solar	Tough Enough	WWE Bottomline		Wwe Raw				Wwe Heat		Wow		Slamball		UFC Recall				Thunder Box	
Nickelodeon	Girls In Love	Kenan & Kel	1, 2, 3	Snick: Unfabulous (New) All Grown Up My Dad The Rock Star Drake & Josh				Danny Phantom	My Life As A Teenage Robot	SpongeBob SquarePants	Fairly Odd Parents	Sabrina, The Teenage Witch	Romeo	Girls In Love	Kenan & Kel	As Told By Ginger	Rocket Power	Hey Arnold!	The Wild Thornberrys
MYX		Urban MYX	MYX Backtrax	Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Presents		Top Of The Pops	MYX Remakes	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	Club MYX	Take 5	OPM MYX		MYX Live!	
ETC		Dateline		The Today Show		Saturday Night Live		NBC Nightly News	Entertainment Tonight	One Tree Hill		Queer Eye For A Straight Guy		Saturday Night Live		Tonight Show With Jay Leno		Elimidate	Change of Heart
Cinema One	Booba				Singsing Ni Lola				My Movie				Urban Rangers				I Will Survive		
Studio 23								Sports TV	Game Plan	7th Heaven	Boston Public	Gilmore Girls	The Bachelor (8:40 PM)		Studio 23 Present				Real Deal
AXN		Single White Female				Global Adventure		The Right Stuff II	Rated X	Now See This (Season II)	Now See This (Season II)	Ripley's Believe It or Not		Alias (Season III)		The Big Hit			
Star World	Action Man	Totally Outrageous Behavior Caught On Tape	Weird TV	Miami Vice		Adventure Inc		Roswell		Dark Angel		TNA Wrestling/ One Night Only! Rod Stewart in Concert		World's Worst Drivers Caught On Tape 1		Dog The Bounter	Cops	The Kumars At No. 42	Goodness Gracious Me
CNN	Diplomatic License	World News	World Business This Week	World News	People In The News	Larry King Live		World News	World Sport			World News		World News	Talk Asia	World News	The Daily Show With John Stewart, Global Ed	World News	World Sport
National Geographic		Big Bite Night				Devils Of The Deep		Creature Feature				Saturday Unlimited				Big Bite Night			
Solar Sports		IBF Yonex Singapore Open '04			Sounds of the Finals		Vintage NBA, All Star Teams of the Decade		Greatest Classics				2002 All-Star Special	NBA Rookie Challenge					Greatest Game '89 NBA All-Star Game
Lifestyle Network	Carol Duvall	HGTV Special		Radical Sabbatical	Road & Track	Genuine Article	Food Fight	Date Plate	Emeril Live		Nigella Bites	Brini Maxwell Show	Royalty A-Z		Modern Girl's Guide	E! True Hollywood Story		Look For Less	BTVR
HBO		City By The Sea (2:55 PM)			Virginia's Run (4:40 PM)				Harry Potter And The Chamber Of Secrets					21 Grams				Conspiracy Theory	
Star Movies				She's The One (4:10 PM)			Joe Dirt (5:45 PM)				The Prophecy (7:25 PM)			Drumline				Phenomenon	
Cartoon Network		The Detective Squad	Tom & Jerry Show	Swat Kats	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	X-Men Evolution	Justice League	Atomic Betty	Foster's Home For Imaginary Friends	Xiaolin Showdown	My Scene: Jammin' In Jamaica			Cartoon Cartoon Show	Power Rangers Ninja Storm	Zoids: Fuzors	Time Squad	Harvey Birdman (11:15PM)	Justice League
ESPN				Big 12 Conf.: Kansas vs. Texas Tech				Big 10 Conf. Indiana @ Ohio State				Big 10 Conf. Indiana @ Ohio State				Pool/Snooker Mosconi Cup '04		FA Cup 2004/05 Rnd 5	
Disney Channel	Potatoes And Dragons	Sabrina's Secret Life	The Legend Of Tarzan	Wicked Science	Viva S Club	Martin Mystery/ That's So Raven/ Dave The Barbarian/Phil Of The Future				Mr. Bean	The Land Before Time VI: The Secret of Saurus Rock			My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	According To Jim	America's Funniest Home Video	Eddie's Million Dollar Cook-Off	
Cinemax		White Rush (3:15 PM)			The Pardon Officer (4:45 PM)				Eight Legged Freaks (6:20 PM)			Spy Game				Secretary			
Hallmark Channel		She's Too Young				A Time To Remember				Jack		Dynasty: Behind Sex, Greed And Manipulation			Fabio Montale (10:35PM)				
Discovery Channel		Human Discovery		Ultimate Cars	Building The Ultimate	Unsolved History				Wild Discovery				Boys Of H Company				Extreme Discovery	
MTV Philippines			Carmen & Dave	Whatever Things	Asia Ad Post Show	MTV Urban Beats	Globally Dismissed	Room Raiders	Taildaters	One Bad Trip	MTV Urban Beats	MTV Fashionista	MTV Talk	MTV Private Party				VH1 Behind the Music: Aerosmith	
Sports Plus				Acc Basketball: N. Carolina @ Georgia Tech					Golf Int'l.	Bikini Destination	Inside the PGA	WTA Open Gaz de France Finals				Nissan Open Day2			
EWTN	Defending Life	Angelus (3:15 PM)	G.K. Chesterton	My Little Angels	The Donut Man	The Holy Rosary With Mother Angelica and the Nuns Of Our Lady Of Angels Monastery	Black And Roman Catholic	Catholic Compass		The World Over		Fr. John Corapi		Daily Mass		Angelus (10:15PM)	The Church And Culture Today	Life on The Rock Encore	

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Davis leads surge of int'l bets in LA

DAVIS watches his drive. REUTERS

LOS ANGELES—PGA Tour rookie Brian Davis of England headed an international-packed leaderboard after the rain-hampered first round of the 4.8 million dollar Los Angeles PGA event was halted due to darkness.

The 30-year-old Davis fired a six-under 65 on Thursday and was one shot clear of Northern Ireland's Darren Clarke and fellow Englishman Luke Donald, who both carded 66s. American Brett Quigley also shot 66.

The top of the leaderboard has an international flavor to it as six non-Americans are within two shots of the lead.

On a windy, rain-soaked day at the Riviera Country Club, Davis' opening round included an eagle at the first, as well as four birdies in a five-hole stretch beginning at the sixth.

Four golfers were still on the course when play was suspended because of darkness.

The par-71 course is already considered one of the toughest layouts on the tour because of its deceptive breaks and small greens, but Thursday's heavy rain made it play even longer.

Two-time defending champion Mike Weir of Canada is just two shots adrift of Davis after posting a four-under par 67.

Weir's round included six birdies and two bogeys. He is tied with seven others for fifth.

The left-handed Canadian is trying to do something that Ben Hogan and Arnold Palmer couldn't and become the first in Los Angeles history to win the event three consecutive years.

Weir is tied with American Tiger Woods, Argentina's Jose Coceres, Adam Scott of Australia, Omar Uresti, Kevin Sutherland and alternate James Driscoll.

Starting on the back nine, Woods had five birdies through nine holes, but stumbled with consecutive bogeys on holes four and five.

Woods is looking to regain the number one ranking. He needs to finish fourth or better this week to overtake Vijay Singh. "I putted terrible," said Woods. "But I am hitting great, so I am in the clubhouse at 67.

American John Daly, who tied for fourth here last year, shot a two-under 69. *AFP*

TIGER Woods hits his approach shot on the 18th hole. REUTERS

Her Majesty sets dinner for Olympic execs

LONDON—Britain's Queen Elizabeth II will be drafted into action in the cause of London's bid to host the 2012 Olympic Games when she hosts a Buckingham Palace dinner for the visiting International Olympic committee evaluation commission on Friday.

As well as making sure the 13-strong IOC team are entertained in style, the dinner is also designed to counter allegations of lukewarm support by the Queen for the London bid.

Her belief in the capital's chances was called into question when she reportedly told a teenager at a recent reception that Paris, the long-time favorite and one of five bidding cities in all, would win the race because of greater public support.

Emphasizing the importance of Friday's dinner, the full-size Royal Standard, usually reserved for state visits, will be flying over a floodlit Palace.

Officials certainly have appeared to pull-out all the stops with guardsmen in bearskins on sentry duty and the Grand Entrance, inside the Palace Quadrangle, will be lit by torches in the style of the Olympic flame. *AFP*

DLSZ football kicks off today

THE SECOND De La Salle-Zobel Football Fiesta unfolds today at the La Salle-Zobel fields with more than 70 teams participating.

Titles in five age-groups for boys, U-18, -16, -14, -12, -9 and four for girls (U-18, -16, -14, -12) are up for grabs in the two-day tournament.

Philippine Football Federation president Johnny Romualdez and secretary-general Domeca Garamendi head the list of special guests who will grace the opening ceremonies scheduled at 8 a.m.

The DLSZ Parents Association Sports Development Foundation chaired by Cathy Rivilla is organizing the event in coordination with Sports Development Office (SDO) head Moses Lozada and Hans Smit.

Also expected to attend is Ms. Tess Mangahas, the executive director of the First Gentleman Sports Foundation, one of the sponsors together with Coca-Cola, Purefoods and Jollibee Alabang.

IAN THORPE: World Championships absentee

Thorpe needs to escape his 'fish bowl' life

SYDNEY—Olympic champion Ian Thorpe needs to escape his 'fish bowl' life and reevaluate himself ahead of the 2008 Beijing Games, Australian swim great Dawn Fraser said Friday.

Fraser said the five-time Australian Olympic gold medalist's decision to skip this year's FINA world championships in Montreal to help his long-term goal of swimming at the Beijing Olympics was the right move.

She said she was confident from her own experience that Thorpe could become an even better swimmer after opting to take a year off from competition following his success at his second Olympics in Athens last year.

Fraser took a year off after her second Olympics in Rome in 1960 and she came back to break the world 100-m freestyle record in 1962 and win a third consecutive gold in the event in Tokyo in 1964.

"I can understand Thorpe's decision and I think it's good for him to have that rest," Fraser said Friday.

Fraser believed Thorpe's competitiveness would not have allowed him to swim at this year's world championships in Montreal without a full preparation.

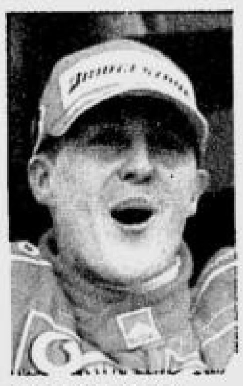
"With all due respect, Thorpe being Thorpe, he's a champion and he doesn't want to get beaten," she said.

"He's not going to compete if he's not fit and he doesn't want to lose.

"And if he wants to go back to Bejing, he needs to have at least six months away from competitive swimming.

"I took a year off in 1961. When you're up where he is, you don't want to be beaten." Fraser said Thorpe, 22, was living in a "fish bowl" with the media following his every move and needed some time to himself. *AFP*

Ferrari teammate likens Schu to a sumo wrestler



SCHUMACHER

LONDON—Brazilian Rubens Barrichello once likened Ferrari team mate Michael Schumacher to a sumo wrestler.

The seven-time world champion is certainly awesome, easily the most successful racer in Formula One history with a string of records set to stand for as long as he lives.

Max Mosley, president of Formula One's governing body, also sees the 36-year-old German as a wrestler, but in his case more like the masked grapplers of 1960s Spain.

"He's one of those sporting phenomena isn't he, he's like Muhammad Ali or (Pete) Sampras or Tiger Woods at his peak... it's the 'I was there, I saw him do that' appeal," said the International Automobile Federation head.

"But the other aspect is that when somebody does blow him off, which sooner or later they are going to, it's all the more sensational.

"It's like the masked wrestlers they used to have in Spain," added Mosley.

"Everybody would always try and get his mask off and he'd beat everybody up and then the tension would rise and rise until at the end somebody would get the mask off."

This season, starting in Australia on March 6, could see Schumacher return as the Sumo—steamrollering opponents on his way to a sixth title in a row—or the mask could be ripped off at last.

He is now the oldest driver on the starting grid, embarking on his 15th season to try and extend the longest unbroken reign that Formula One has known.

Most pundits are predicting another Schumacher title at the moment. But then again, most expected him to be beaten last year and they could not have been more wrong.

The conventional wisdom in 2004 was that Schumacher, taken to the wire by McLaren's Kimi Raikkonen the previous year, had reached the crest of his career and had nowhere to go but down.

Schumacher replied by winning 13 of the 18 races and romping to the greatest single-season points tally in Formula One history.

He also racked up a record streak of seven wins in a row in the same season and took his career haul to 83 grand prix wins. *Reuters*

Greenwell wants 1988 MVP award of Canseco

RALEIGH, North Carolina—The man who finished second to Jose Canseco in voting for the 1988 American League most valuable player award says he should have the award now that Canseco is talking publicly about his steroid use.

"Where's my MVP?" former Boston Red Sox outfielder Mike Greenwell told the Fort Myers, Florida, News-Press. "(Canseco's) an admitted steroid user. I was clean."

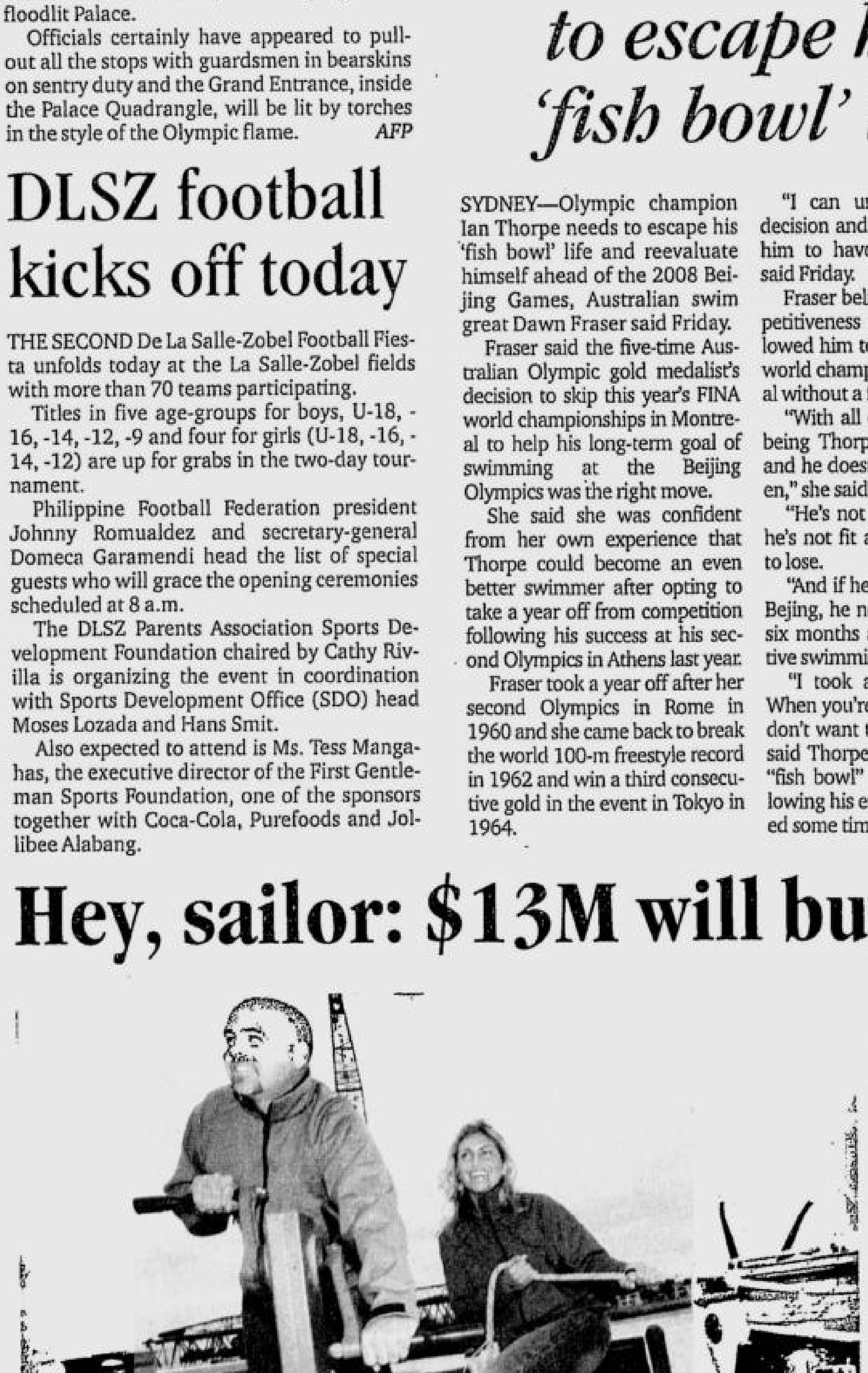
Canseco, in his book, "Juiced: Wild Times, Rampant 'Roids, Smash Hits & How Baseball Got Big," and in interviews with CBS's "60 Minutes" news program, says he injected former home run king Mark McGwire and former teammates Jason Giambi, Raphael Palmeiro, Juan Gonzalez and Ivan Rodriguez with steroids. All have denied the accusations.

Boston Globe reporter Gorden Edes, a member of the Baseball Writers Association of America, said he did not believe the association would strip admitted steroid users of their awards.

"Like it or not, steroids were not a banned substance at that time in Major League Baseball," Edes told the News-Press.

Canseco told "60 Minutes Wednesday" that his steroid use was no secret to baseball officials. "They knew what I was doing. They knew what the other baseball players were doing, if they were involved in taking steroids," Canseco said. "Owners knew it. Players Association knew it." But Sandy Alderson, Major League Baseball's executive vice-president, said: "That's absolutely not true." Asked on "60 Minutes Wednesday" did he think that Canseco was taking steroids, Alderson, the Oakland general manager when Canseco played there, said: "I had suspicions, over time, that he might be." *Reuters*

Hey, sailor: $13M will buy a spot on America's Cup crew



JOHN Sweeney and Tina Kleinjan of the Sausalito Challenge 2007 crew aboard one of the America's Cup boats in Treasure Island, Calif., on Thursday. The Sausalito Challenge is offering a spot on its boat to the person willing to pay a "participation fee" of approximately $13 M. AP

SAN DIEGO—Hey, sailor, got an extra $13 million or so burning a hole in your pocket and want to be in the America's Cup?

Sausalito Challenge, based across the Golden Gate Bridge from San Francisco, is offering one of its 17 crew positions to the most qualified person willing to pay a "participation fee" of at least 10 million euros.

Sausalito Challenge has received a handful of inquiries about the "celebrity crew" position, as it's called on the syndicate's web site. Sailing manager John Sweeney said the Popeye wannabes include a rapper, a sheik and an apparel company looking to place one of its athlete endorsers—a soccer player—in a high-profile position. Sweeney won't name names until after the March 15 application deadline.

Syndicate budgets have been blown out of the stratosphere since a handful of billionaires got involved during the 2003 America's Cup, which was won by a Swiss team backed by a biotech tycoon. The next cup will be in Valencia, Spain, in 2007, and a series of warmup regattas in Europe began last summer. Europe is expensive, and the exchange rate is unfavorable—one euro costs approximately $1.30.

"I think people understand that if you're not a billionaire, you have to be very creative," said Sweeney, a professional sailor who's a mere multimillionaire after having sold a billboard company he owned with his business partner, Tina Kleinjan, who's the CEO of Sausalito Challenge. "If you look at the teams in the cup, everyone has a guy who, if he's not a billionaire, he's at least worth $100 million. We don't have that. We have to be creative."

Last year, Sausalito Challenge tried to find an exclusive sponsor through bidding on eBay. No one met the reserve price, but Sweeney said his syndicate at least found a software company willing to be a co-sponsor. A European auto company also is interested. Sweeney wouldn't identify either company.

Sausalito Challenge has filed paperwork with America's Cup Management but must finalize its sponsorship deals before being accepted as an official challenger. It would be just the second US-based challenge, joining San Francisco Bay rival BMW Oracle Racing.

Sweeney said Sausalito Challenge can survive without the 10 million euros ($13 million) the "celebrity crew" would bring, but that much cash would represent one-sixth of its budget of 60 million euros ($78 million).

"If he gets it, it's the best thing that's happened to the America's Cup," said four-time winner Dennis Conner, who has said he might be priced out of the next regatta. "I think it would be a grand marketing coup." *AP*

SPORTS

HOPE OPEN

Django sees title fight with Bata

By Marlon Bernardino, *Contributor*

REYES: Ranked No. 1 in the tourney. PDI PHOTO

FORMER world No. 1 Francisco "Django" Bustamante yesterday predicted a head-on championship clash with Efren "Bata" Reyes as he dared other contenders to try their best in the Hope P1-Million All-Filipino Billiards Open which starts on Monday.

Fresh from his triumph at the 2005 Weert 10-ball Open in the Netherlands where he pocketed the top $10,000 purse, Bustamante said it would be hard to dislodge Reyes in the series that will be shown over IBC-13 from 8 p.m.-10:30 p.m.

"Sa tingin ko, si Pareng Efren (Reyes) pa rin ang mahigpit na kalaban sa titulo (I feel Reyes would be my top rival for the crown)," Bustamante told the INQUIRER.

Bustamante faces young Joven Alba in the first round of the event sponsored by Hope, Talk and Text, Smart and organized by Puyat Sports boss Aristeo "Putch" Puyat, Jemah Television president Mark Roces and tournament director Rolly Vicente.

Bata Reyes, who won the 1-pocket and 9-ball events of the 2005 Derby City Classic in Louisville, Kentucky, will face 21-year-old Carlo Viado of Moncada, Tarlac.

The other opening round matches pit Marlon Manalo against Jeffrey "Jeff Bata" de Luna; Leonardo "Dodong Dadiangas" Andam against Gandy Valle; Warren Kiamco against Antonio Gabica; reigning world champion Alex "The Lion" Pagulayan against Roberto "Bert Pasay" Dy; Lee Van Corteza against Luis Saberdo and Rodolfo "Boy Samson" Luat against Edgar "Malabon" Acaba.

The event will use the race-to-9 alternate break format. A player gets eliminated after two losses.

The top finisher in the Last 16 outside of Reyes, Bustamante, Corteza and Pagulayan will qualify in the San Miguel Asian 9-Ball Tour aside from receiving the top purse of P500,000.

Before Bustamante made his prediction, Reyes had bared that he feels the creeps when pitted against fellow Filipinos.

"Nararamdaman ko 'yung pressure *kapag Pilipino ang kalaban* (I feel the pressure when I'm playing against fellow Filipinos), said Reyes. *"Siguro dahil halos lahat nag-e-*expect *na ako ang mananalo* (Maybe it's because almost everybody is expecting me to win)."

Bata's last three stints in the World Pool Championships can attest to that.

He lost to stablemate Bustamante in the knockout phase of the WPC in 2002 and 2003 and to snooker ace Marlon Bernardino in the world pool last 16 last year.

"Pero sa totoo lang, maraming Pinoy na world class *ang galing sa bilyar* (But the truth is many Filipinos are world-class billiard players)," Reyes said. *"Kumpleto rekado tayo, magaling sa* pocketing *at magaling dumiskarte sa lamesa* (We're complete players, good at pocketing and table strategies)."

The Hope Open is sanctioned by the Billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines (BSCP) headed by Ernesto Fajardo.

BUSTAMANTE: Reyes hard to beat. AP

Off-form Pacquiao brod knocked gut in Thailand

INTERNATIONAL Boxing Federation Pan Pacific featherweight champion Fahprakorb Rakkiatgym landed a single blow to the midsection and knocked out Bobby Pacquiao in the 9th round in Pattaya, Thailand, yesterday.

Pacquiao, younger brother of world boxing sensation Manny Pacquiao, crumbled following a weak blow to the body after what had appeared a close fight with both protagonists unable to inflict serious damage in the previous rounds.

"Bobby got tired, took a weak body punch and went down. It seemed Bobby was out of shape. He should have beaten this bum (Rakkiatgym)," informed a ringsider who went to Pattaya to cheer for Pacquiao.

The loss saw Pacquiao's record dip to 21 wins, 11 losses, 3 draws.

Rakkiatgym, who was stopped cold by Manny Pacquiao in Davao in 2002, improved to 47 wins, 3 losses with 30 KO's.

They fought an even opening round before Rakkiatgym earned a slight edge in the second round as he kept himself busier. However, Pacquiao retaliated in the third and outboxed the taller Thai.

By the fourth, Rakkiatgym upped his tempo and won the round, followed by the uneventful fifth round.

Pacquiao initiated action and handily took the sixth and seventh rounds.

By the eighth, however, Pacquiao began to lose steam and yielded the round to Rakkiatgym before finally getting tagged to the body in the ninth. *Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor*

Espinosa tries again, fights Mexican in Stockton today

ESPINOSA

FORMER two-division world champion Luisito Espinosa tries to regain a measure of respect when he fights Cristobal "Lacandon" Cruz in a 10-round featherweight main event topbilling the "Guilty Fight Night Boxeo de Campeones" today at the Stockton Memorial Civic Auditorium in Stockton, California.

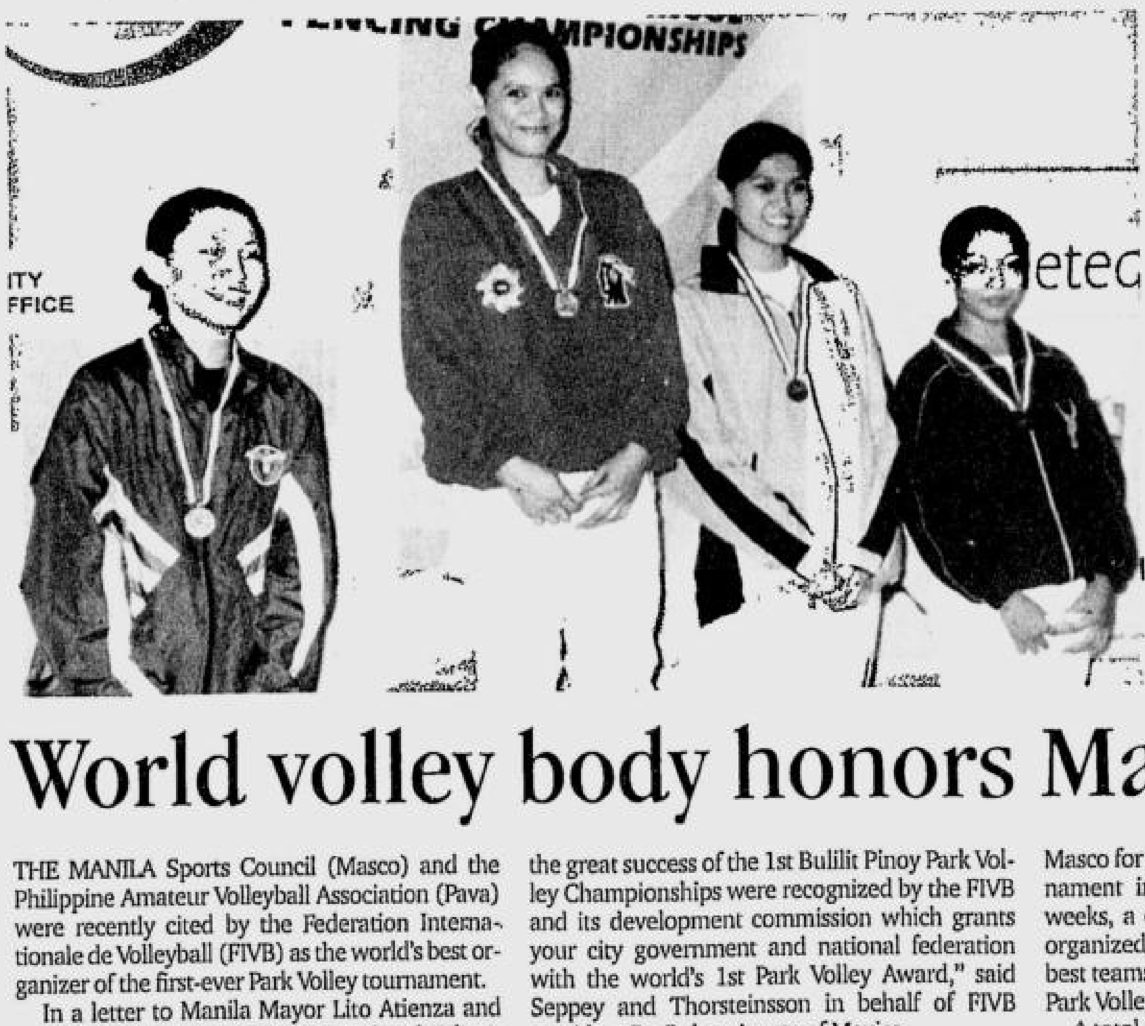
The 37-year-old Espinosa, who only has three wins in his last eight bouts, will be facing a hard-punching 27-year-old former WBC Continental Americas featherweight champ who has won his last three fights.

On July 9 last year, Espinosa took a beating as he lost via a seventh-round technical knockout to a much younger Carlos Navarro in Nevada. Prior to that, he had prevailed on a first-round knockout over non-descript Marco Angel Perez.

Cruz, a neighbor of Erik Morales, is coming off a morale-boosting fourth-round technical knockout win over Jose Navarrete last Jan. 7 following two previous wins both in October last year over Cornelius Lock and Mario Flores.

The undercard pits Pittsburg's unbeaten Arturo Morales against Mexican Arturo Urena in an 8-round super-lightweight tiff.

In other bouts, journeymen Kenny Lopez and James Brock trade leathers in a 6-round light heavyweight tussle; local boy Carlos Zepeda takes on Enrique Gutierrez; Jose Bermejo clashes with Hilarió Lopez; Nick Brooks dukes it out with Mac Dancig; Rene Lopez fights Geraldo Arcos; while Francisco Leal faces Ricardo Valencia. *Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor*



TOP FENCER

University of the East's Ronella Espadill (second from left) displays her gold medal after emerging as women's individual sabre champion in the recent 4th Escrima Liga national inter-school fencing championships organized by Team Ventures Inc. and sponsored by Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, Philippine Amateur Fencers Association Inc., Philippine Sports Commission, Celestque and 101.5 Crossover. Also in picture, from left, are UP's Amethyst Dulig, silver medalist; and joint bronze winners Jenny Perez (UST) and Sheila Abadilla (FEU). Ateneo dislodged UE as overall champion in the league which drew 220 students from 11 schools.

PlyoSports offers summer golf acceleration program

THE CONDITIONING regimen used by the world's finest golfers is now available in the country through PlyoSports' summer golf acceleration program workouts.

The Frappier Acceleration Sports Training module, devised by exercise physiologist John Frappier, will be used in the workouts.

Tiger Woods, Vijay Singh and local golf talents like top amateur Jong Laput, and teacher Ruby Chico-Walker are enrolled in the same program.

Benefits of PlyoSports' golf program include being trained for actual golf movement while improving flexibility and balance. PlyoSports is at the Adidas Sports Kamp corner Libertad Drive, Fort Bonifacio Global City, Taguig. Rates are P15,000 for full sessions. Call 8161131.

World volley body honors Masco, Pava

THE MANILA Sports Council (Masco) and the Philippine Amateur Volleyball Association (Pava) were recently cited by the Federation Internationale de Volleyball (FIVB) as the world's best organizer of the first-ever Park Volley tournament.

In a letter to Manila Mayor Lito Atienza and Masco chief Arnold "Ali" Atienza dated Feb. 4, FIVB general manager Jean-Pierre Seppey and technical coordinator Helgi Thorsteinsson said the international federation recognizes Manila's tremendous help and support in staging "a very successful" Park Volley Championships held at the Rizal Park in March last year.

"All the efforts made for the organization and the great success of the 1st Bulilit Pinoy Park Volley Championships were recognized by the FIVB and its development commission which grants your city government and national federation with the world's 1st Park Volley Award," said Seppey and Thorsteinsson in behalf of FIVB president Dr. Ruben Acosta of Mexico.

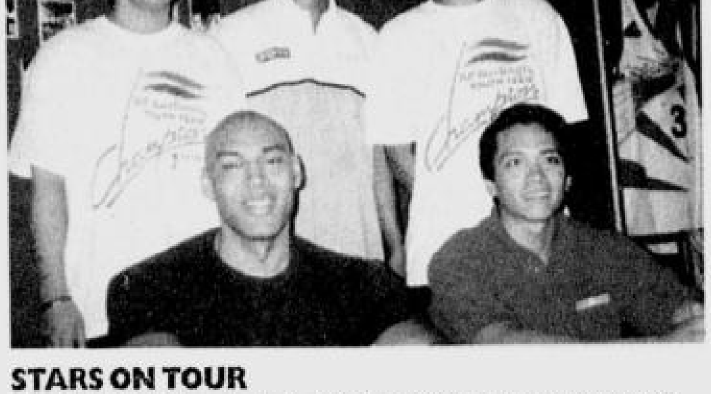
"Today's children are tomorrow's volleyball stars. Therefore, it is fundamental to give them the appropriate structure to develop their skills."

Early last year, the FIVB called on all national federations under its arm to help in the promotion of the sport around the world.

In turn, the Pava sought the support of the Masco for the staging of the first Park Volley tournament in the country and in less than two weeks, a citywide elimination tournament was organized by the Masco to draw together the best teams that saw action in the 1st Bulilit Pinoy Park Volley Championships.

A total of 80 teams and about 500 participants aged 15 and under from all over the Big City gathered at the Rizal Park to compete simultaneously on 20 playing courts under the technical supervision of the Pava.

As additional reward, the FIVB donated 100 Mikasa park volleyballs and 50 volleyball nets to both the Masco and Pava.


STARS ON TOUR

The NAM Mall Tour, featuring PBA stars Nic Belasco and Ali Peek and La Salle standout Mark Cardona—for whom NAM was named—visited SM Fairview and SM North Edsa recently to promote health and sports nutrition. The tour is organized by GNC, the leading food, health and sport supplements retail chain. Peek (seated left) and JV Borromeo (right), VP for operations of GNC and UST Tigers (left to right, second row) Darryl Bautista, Jomar Datang and Dylan Ababou attended the proceedings.

Xavier High squares title series with St. Stephen

XAVIER High held off defending champion St. Stephen High, 76-70, to knot their best-of-three series for the 29th Hitachi-Metro Manila Tiong Lian Basketball League championship at 1-all at the Chiang Kai Shek Gym.

Woodward John Co scored 19 points, grabbed 12 rebounds and handed out four assists to lead Xavier, which played steadier in the final three minutes in the match sanctioned by the Basketball Association of the Philippines, sponsored by Hitachi and supported by And1, Hang Ten, Healthy Options and Davies Paints.

Co sank four key free throws off Anthony Galongca as Xavier turned a 64-65 deficit with 3:25 left into a 71-69 lead heading into the final 1:37.

A Lawrence Wu split shoved St. Stephen to within 70-71, before the Xavier defense held its rivals scoreless the rest of the way.

Wesley Contreras shared scoring honors with Co with Rejan Lee and Charles Justin Tiu adding 14 and 11 points, respectively.

Highlights of Game 2 will be aired over IBC-13 on Sunday, 3 p.m.-5 p.m.

The scores:

XAVIER 76—Co 19, Wesley Contreras 19, Lee 14, Tiu 11, Westin Contreras 5, Dee 4, Yap 4, De Jesus 1, Lim 0, Tio 0, Sta. Maria 0, Gonato 0, Yao 0.

ST. STEPHEN 70—Co 27, Aparicio 11, Wu 8, Yulo 5, Gaw 4, Tan 4, Cua 4, Galongca 3, Llave 2, Ty 2, Ong 0.

Quarters: 15-12, 38-33, 55-50, 76-70.

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Travolta, Bullock starrers boost their box-office clout

By Nestor U. Torre

THURMAN AND TRAVOLTA. Play a talented, feisty young singer and a streetwise mobster-turned-movie producer, respectively.

POPULAR film stars get offered the best projects in moviedom, but they have time to act in only a few of them. Deciding which offer to accept is a daunting task, because so much could be riding on the chosen project's success or failure.

If it's a hit, it could propel its lead player's career to even more stratospheric heights. But, if it flops, it could seriously curtail the upward trajectory of its star's career.

Which films are bankable stars' best bets this year? Keanu Reeves is gambling on "Constantine," a paranormal thriller that further extends his enigmatic Neo persona that worked so well for him in the "Matrix" films.

BULLOCK. Opts for the sequel route in "Miss Congeniality 2: Armed and Fabulous."

This time around, Reeves plays a man who has literally been to hell, and back. A police detective (Rachel Weisz) enlists his help in solving the mysterious death of her beloved twin sister. Their quest takes them to some eerily dangerous places that test their resolve.

Juicy projects

Why did Reeves choose to do this movie, rather than the many other juicy projects he's been offered? "It had one of the best scripts I've read," he shares. "It has humor, intelligence, vitality. And I especially appreciated how everything was not obvious.

"There's mystery and contradiction. And Constantine himself has a strong sense of morality, yet his ethics are a little blurry. He's trying to right some wrongs, but he doesn't always go about it in the nicest way."

For his part, John Travolta, has chosen to once again play Chili Palmer, the streetwise mobster-turned-movie-producer from "Get Shorty." In his new starrer, "Be Cool," Chili has abandoned the fickle movie industry and gone into the music business. He tangles with Russian mobsters and gangsta rappers as he takes a talented, feisty young singer (Uma Thurman) under his wing.

From the recording studio to an Aerosmith concert, and on to the MTV Music Awards, he manipulates events by using his signature blend of wiseguy skills and negotiation tactics.

Risky business

It's a risky business, but we can expect Travolta and Thurman to end up ruling it with aplomb. Other stars include Vince Vaughn, Harvey Keitel and Danny DeVito.

Sandra Bullock has also opted to go the sequel route. She's starring in "Miss Congeniality 2: Armed and Fabulous." This time around, things haven't been going so well for the FBI agent who worked undercover as a beauty pageant contestant.

Reeling from a broken romance, she agrees to be "the face of the FBI" on the TV talk show circuit. She soon likes her new job too much, prompting her partner (Regina King) to point out that the pampered Bureau star is turning into FBI Barbie.

Strict orders

But, when her best friend is kidnapped in Las Vegas, Bullock's crime-busting instincts kick in once again. Despite strict orders from her superiors not to get involved, she goes for broke.

Finally, Vin Diesel redefines what it means to be an action hero in the heartwarming family

TRAVOLTA/ A2-5

Wanted: Venues for digital films

By Rica Arevalo

YOU spend years finishing a degree in communication arts or mass communication. Then, you take film workshops to further enhance your skills. You work in productions and train under directors who terminate your services. But, the stubbornness in you keeps you yearning to make films.

Now, comes the Cinemalaya Philippine Independent Film Festival. A grant is given to subsidize your directorial debut. Additional money is loaned by generous relatives. Cooperative actors and friends are used and abused to be in your production team. Luckily, everyone survives the shooting.

Finally, you now have your master tape or DVD in your hands. You have just finished your first full-length digital film!

Chance

But, after being screened at the Cinemalaya festival, how do you make sure your work gets a chance (no matter how slim) for a theatrical run?

In digital filmmaking, there is no celluloid involved, nor a reel projector that flickers at the back of the theater. Everything is digital—from production, distribution and exhibition. Pixels are projected rather than the traditional and expensive 35mm print.

This is something new, and it seems to be growing in numbers here. The SM and Robinsons theater chains have started screening digital films. It's a great alternative to cinema viewing. The quality remains video-like, but because of technology, the "look" and sound design are improving.

Distant towns

South America's largest country, Brazil, has dared to build hundreds of all-digital cinemas. By eliminating celluloid and transport costs, distributors can cheaply and quickly beam box-office hits to distant towns the same day they première in other parts of the world.

The CCP's Dream Theater is a pioneer in screening audio-visual work, sports and other entertainment broadcasts via satellite.

Independent digital films are on a roll now, and theater chains have to embrace and welcome this development.

Digital filmmakers have to start making movies exclusively on digital to make use of this new technology, or else their hard work and money will go to waste if their films don't get distributed.

Heart Evangelista has fashion sense

By Mary Ann A. Bautista

HEART Evangelista got her name because she was born on Feb. 14. The name fits her because she exudes lightness and radiance. Nope, she's no prima donna, but admits that she's *maarte*—in a good way.

Confidence

"Girls should take care of themselves and should always look their best. That will give them confidence," she reasons.

In her spare time, she goes malling at Glorietta with friends Sarah Christopher and Angelica Panganiban. "I know all the shortcuts and the nearest restrooms there. We take pictures of the three of us. *Marami kaming* neoprints for a scrapbook. We go to fashion and make-up shops.

"Scented lotions are my favorites. I go for the smell of grapes, so I like the Body Shop's Grape Body Butter. I mix that with Lancome Miracle. I also like the Acca Kappa lotion and perfume, and the vanilla scent spray of Bath & Body Works," Heart shares.

Her passion for music led to her becoming a VJ on MYX, and to a solo debut album. "I sing in the shower, in front of the mirror. I sing live. I really love singing! I also dance and paint," she adds.

Hard to please

"My dad's hard to please, but he appreciates the things I'm doing now. I earn, but my parents still pay for food, and for the salaries of my *yaya* and driver. My siblings are proud of me because people recognize me, but nothing has changed at home. They don't give me special treatment."

People have linked her with John Prats and Geoff Eigenmann, but they are just friends. "They're my *ka*-love team, so people wonder if there's real romance. John and I are best friends."

She's toying with the idea of designing clothes and accessories. "I'm still deciding on what to take in college, but fashion is really my first love. I want to look clean and fresh, so I choose clothes that are comfortable. If ever I'm noticed, I want people to say *na ang bangu-bango kong tingnan,*" she shares.

Elegant

Heart likes wearing white because it makes her look elegant. She says, "Style *is* wearing something that is you. You just have to be real. My favorite trend is vintage wear. I love wearing pants and sandals. I like Kate Hudson for her sense of style—she carries anything well. She has confidence and good posture."

EVANGELISTA. No special treatment at home.

Ina Feleo makes her movie debut

By Remy M. Umerez

FELEO. Plays Blessed Virgin Mary in Ben Yalung's "Birhen ng Manaoag."

NINETEEN-YEAR-OLD Ina Feleo is the youngest of two daughters of director Laurice Guillen and Johnny Delgado. She is a creative writing junior at the Ateneo de Manila University. She will make her first big-screen appearance in the film, "Birhen ng Manaoag," playing the role of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Ina, whose full name is Trina, got the part upon the recommendation of film director Marilou Diaz-Abaya. Director Ben "M7" Yalung was impressed when he met Ina for the first time. "Marilou was right, Ina looks like the image of the Virgin Mary in Manaoag. I learned later that *ipinaglihi siya ni* Laurice *sa birhen,*" he says.

Mama Mary's will

Ina thought she was going to play the friend of a friend in just one episode of the Cine Suerte production. "I was shocked when told *na ako ang gaganap na birhen.* I couldn't picture myself as the mother of Jesus, but I was honored. My parents were happy for me and told me that it was perhaps Mama Mary's will."

Ina can relate well to the role because of the Feleo family's involvement in the Marian movement.

She recalls: "When I was seven years old, it was the birthday of my dad when we decided to take a trip to Agoo to witness the apparition of the Blessed Mother. It was the start of a spiritual transformarion for all of us. We became part of the movement, whose mission is to bring families together and teach them to pray the rosary. We went to as many places as possible to spread the word.

"We lived like missionaries, *pero hindi po totoong namundok kami.* We still went home to our residence in Quezon City, but my sister Ana and I had to stop schooling. When we went to distant destinations like Bukidnon, we were provided shelter by religious groups. My parents had no job, but we managed to survive—and that to me was in itself a miracle!"

Apparition scenes

For the apparition scenes in the movie, Ina felt strange wearing the same dress that the Virgin of Manaoag wears. Her character is transformed into a peasant girl, who tries to save the character played by Jodi Santamaria from drowning.

In another occasion, she appears as a lovely lady who suddenly hands Jodi a rose, but disappears just as quickly.

Ina doesn't speak much in the movie. In one apparition, she uttered three sentences. It reminded her of her role in the soap opera, "Kahit Kailan," where she played the bestfriend of Jolina Magdangal and spoke no dialogue because her character was mute.

Like her famous mom, she is a stage performer: Last November, she had a singing part in Tanghalang Ateneo's "Lam-Ang," her very first play. This month, Ina plays Jenny in "Three Penny Opera." Ina is also a member of the Bayanihan Dance Company.

"Birhen ng Manaoag" opens in theaters on March 9.

Slim down with a good cup of coffee... and wear that two-piece bikini!
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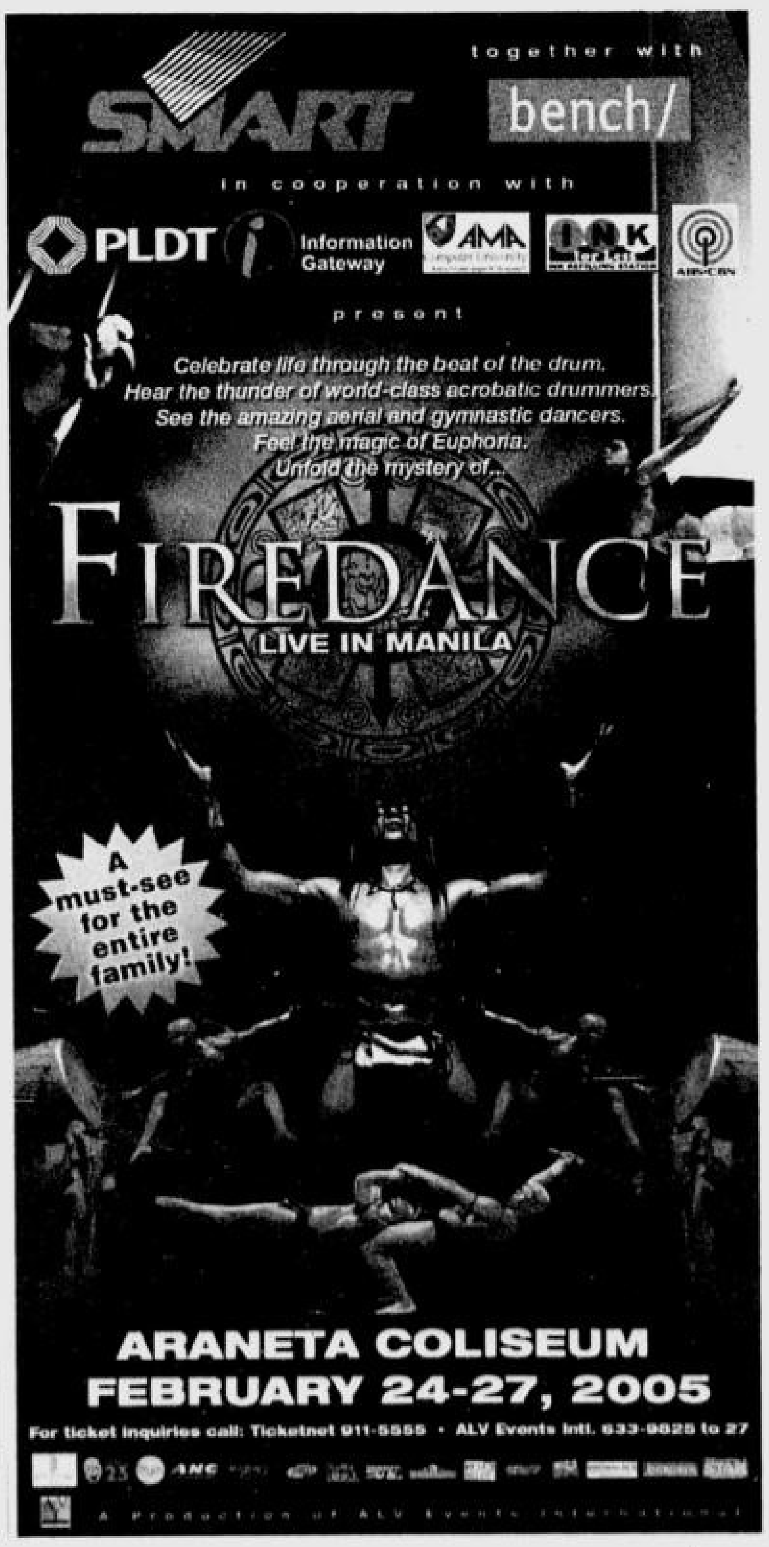

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Outstanding tracks in Collins' album

By Noelani Torre

PHIL Collins' "Love Songs (A Compilation . . . Old and New)" has a title that we find a bit redundant. The 53-year-old musician is, after all, well-known for his romantic ballads. In fact, we don't think we've ever heard a Phil Collins piece that wasn't a love song. Not that we've heard that much—Collins and his music having been associated with the older crowd for the past 10 years.

Nowadays, however, it's become sort of cool to acknowledge a familiarity with his work—something that no doubt springs from the fact that his pleasant music actually has unplumbed depths.

Drummer

Collins has been making music for 30 years now. He started out as the drummer of rock band Genesis, taking over as vocalist when front man Peter Gabriel went solo in 1975. The band still exists today, with Ray Wilson replacing Collins as its frontman. Before he left, however, Collins was instrumental in making the band "one of the biggest-selling acts of the '80s."

"Love Songs," though not a greatest hits collection, gives us what Collins himself considers a "Best Of" of his post-Genesis career. "This album is an opportunity to bring to the surface things that I'm very proud of," he explains, "songs that were forgotten or overlooked along the way."

Rolling Stone dubs him "the nicest regular Joe to ever win pop stardom," and nice is the same adjective we'd use to describe his music. One of the high priests of adult contemporary, Collins has always had a gift for crafting charming and sincere songs, as a listen to this two-disc, 25-song compilation will affirm.

Inspiration

Events in his own life have also given him songwriting inspiration. "For me, writing music is triggered by emotional upheavals," he explains. "My job as a songwriter is to tell the truth, and people understand that."

It's a method that seems to have worked for him over the years. Collins has six Grammy awards and an Oscar under his belt, though he's also had to experience the pain of two failed marriages.

What caught our ear in this collection were the less-popular tracks. Among these would be the album-opener "Tearing and Breaking," a forlorn yet soothingly rendered ballad co-written by John Martyn. Also outstanding are "This Must Be Love" and "If Leaving Me Is Easy," both of which convey a depth of soul that is not always discernable in Collins' lighter material.

Also included are covers of originals like "Groovy Kind of Love," "True Colors," "Somewhere" and "Separate Lives."

COLLINS. His job as a songwriter is to tell the truth.

Special birthday bash

From page A2-3

back to health. She would only go home to take a bath but would immediately rush back to the hospital. The young boy was diagnosed with meningitis, and the only medicine available then had side effects on the central nervous system. Alex is now fiftysomething. For Helen, her children's welfare has always been top priority.

Mommel always prepared the kids' *baon* in school. She was a disciplinarian who imposed strict curfew hours. If they had to go out with friends, permission had to be sought two weeks in advance. They did not bother Mommel for the meaning of an unfamiliar word—they had learned to look it up in the dictionary themselves. They have since earned their degrees in college, most of them graduating at the top of their class.

* * *

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* * *

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RAY
MTRCB RATING: PG 13

5 CHILDREN AND IT
MTRCB RATING: GP

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6 RAY
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10 CONSTANTINE
11 ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13
12 MEET THE FOCKERS

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9 DREAMBOY
10 CONSTANTINE
11 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
12 LET THE LOVE BEGIN

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2 ELEKTRA
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 MEET THE FOCKERS
5 FEBRUARY LOVE FEST
6 DREAMBOY
7 CONSTANTINE
8 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

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2 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
3 FEBRUARY LOVE FEST
4 CONSTANTINE
5 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
6 CONSTANTINE
7 SHALL WE DANCE
8 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
9 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
10 MEET THE FOCKERS
11 DREAMBOY
12 CONSTANTINE

sm city sta. mesa
1 PETA PLAY
2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 CONSTANTINE
4 DREAMBOY
5 CONSTANTINE
6 SHALL WE DANCE
7 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
8 5 CHILDREN AND IT
9 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
10 ELEKTRA

sm city southmall
1 FEBRUARY LOVE FEST
2 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
3 CONSTANTINE
4 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
5 MEET THE FOCKERS
6 DREAMBOY
7 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
8 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
9 ELEKTRA
10 5 CHILDREN AND IT

sm city bicutan
1 CONSTANTINE
2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 DREAMBOY
4 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX

sm cinema tutuban
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

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1 ELEKTRA
2 CONSTANTINE
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 DREAMBOY

LUZON

sm city pampanga
1 CONSTANTINE
2 SHALL WE DANCE
3 DREAMBOY
4 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
5 WITHOUT A PADDLE
6 LET THE LOVE BEGIN

sm city baguio
1 SHALL WE DANCE
2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 DREAMBOY
4 CONSTANTINE

sm city batangas
1 CONSTANTINE
2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 DREAMBOY
4 MEET THE FOCKERS

sm city dasmariñas
1 CONSTANTINE
2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 DREAMBOY
4 ASSAULT ON PRECINCT 13

sm city marilao
1 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
2 DREAMBOY
3 SHALL WE DANCE
4 MEET THE FOCKERS

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2 ELEKTRA
3 CONSTANTINE
4 DREAMBOY
5 CONSTANTINE
6 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
7 SALSA smcinemaexclusive
8 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX

sm city lucena
1 SHALL WE DANCE
2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
4 DREAMBOY

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

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2 CONSTANTINE
3 MEET THE FOCKERS
4 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
5 DREAMBOY
6 WITHOUT A PADDLE
7 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
8 CONSTANTINE

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2 RESERVED
3 SALSA smcinemaexclusive
4 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
5 CONSTANTINE
6 SHALL WE DANCE
7 RESERVED
8 MEET THE FOCKERS

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4 MEET THE FOCKERS
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6 CONSTANTINE

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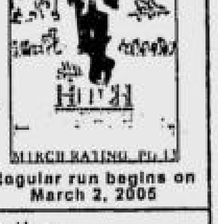

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2 CONSTANTINE 10:55, 1:45, 4:35 7:25, 10:30 PG-13
3 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA 10:55, 1:55, 4:55 7:55, 10:50 PG-13
4 SIDEWAYS 11:30, 2:20, 5:10 8:00, 10:40 PG-13

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5 Saranggani

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3 THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA MTRCB (PG - 13)
4 R A Y MTRCB (PG - 13) 12:30, 3:35, 6:40, 9:45 LMF
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End of the road at 'AI' for Sharon Galvez

By Nestor U. Torre

LAST week, we viewed the semi-final eliminations of "American Idol" in Hollywood. The 193 talents who had passed the first audition were divided into two groups, with the first batch being auditioned, while the other group toured Los Angeles.

As the second elimination round got underway, we kept an eager eye out for "our" lone Fil-Am bet, Sharon (Zar) Galvez, but her audition wasn't featured. Maybe she was in the second group?

A number of good singers were showcased, and we got a better feel of Sharon's competition in the singing tilt. Would she end up an also-ran? Despite the strong competition, we felt she could survive the second elimination round.

Finalists

We hoped hard that she would, because she was our only bet. Last year, there were some four Fil-Ams who made it to the Hollywood stage of the singing contest, including Jasmine Trias and Camile Velasco, who eventually became finalists. This time, there seems to be only Sharon, so we have a lot riding on her.

Well, toward the end of the semi-final auditions of Batch One, we caught a split-second shot of Sharon in a group of "survivors," so as of last week, she was still hanging in there.

Thursday last week, we viewed the show again to see if Sharon was continuing to survive, but we didn't see any shot of her, so we weren't sure. As a result, we decided not to submit our article about her (titled "Sharon Galvez hangs in there"), for fear of being overtaken by negative events.

Last Wednesday, we caught "American Idol" again, and were heartened to see Sharon included in the tilt's remaining 75 semi-finalists. So, she *had* survived!

Good sign

We were even happier when the show did a mini-feature on Sharon, showing her at work as a cocktail waitress, etc. That was a good sign, wasn't it? Why would they do a feature on a loser?

Then came the next round, in which all 75 semi-finalists were asked to sing a song of their choice without any musical accompaniment. Sharon chose to do "The Greatest Love of All," and acquitted herself well.

After that round, the semi-finalists were separated into four groups and put in different rooms. Entire groups would be given either passing or failing marks, so tension was high. Sharon was in Group 1.

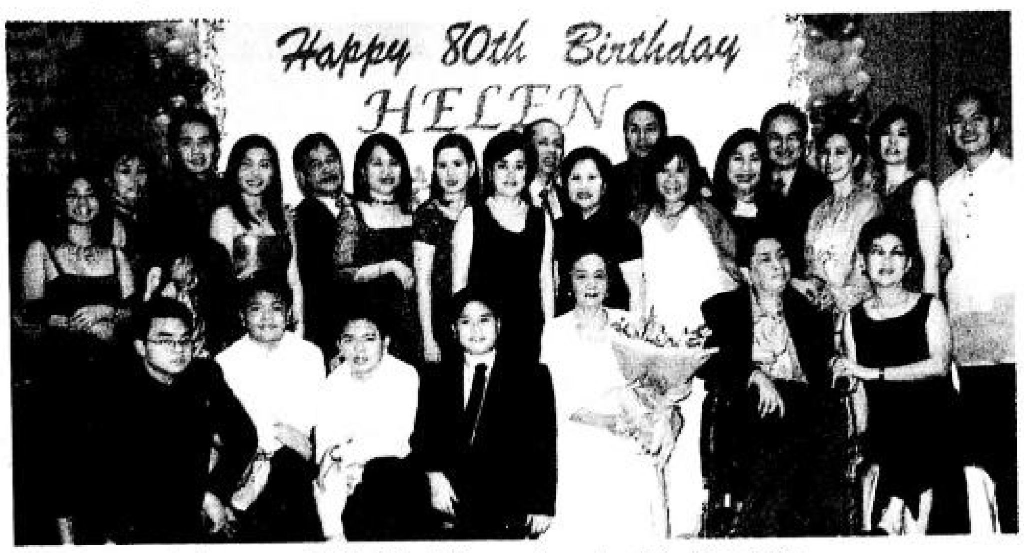
Judges

When the judges spoke to Sharon's batch first, it looked like the group would make it. You don't "execute" the *buena mano* group, do you?

But, that's exactly what happened: Group 1

END/ A2-6

GALVEZ. Lone Filipino bet has struck out.



SISON (seated off-center right) with children and guests at the Mandarin.

Special birthday bash

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

AT THE 80th birthday celebration of Helen del Rosario-Sison at the Mandarin, all of her nine children were present. Maria Sison-Rufli flew in from Thailand, while Rose, Marie and Gisella Sison-Veridiano came home from the US. Siblings Alex, Rolly, Maria Elena Sarmiento and Cynthia Sison-Valdez were elated to see them home.

Song and dance numbers

They performed song and dance numbers to the delight of their "Mommel," as Helen is fondly called. It was Mommel who brought them up after husband Alejo C. Sison, a civil engineer, passed away in 1987.

Helen was a teacher, the type who didn't mince words. But, she was always fair. When her son Alex was hospitalized at only nine months of age, Mommel nursed him

SPECIAL/ A2-2

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'Blue Room,' 'Aspects of Love' lead NVC's 11th season lineup

By Rito P. Asilo

THE NEW Voice Company took sometime to finally decide on a stellar lineup after its 10th anniversary bash, which was capped by successful stagings of Kander and Ebb's "Cabaret" and Diane Shaffer's "Sacrilege."

For its 11th season, the theater group led by Monique Wilson continues its commitment to stage world-class, thought-provoking theatrical fare with productions that include a hit musical, contemporary straight plays, NVC's time-tested staples, classics, and an original Filipino production for the opening of its London branch.

Politics of sex

This month, NVC revisits "The Blue Room," David Hare's highly acclaimed update of Arthur Schnitzler's "La Ronde," a play about the politics of sex and gender, dramatized in 10 acts. (Yes, this is the controversial Nicole Kidman starrer directed by Sam Mendes that had Broadway and the West End abuzz with excitement in 1998.)

Jamie Wilson, fresh from his triumphant portrayal of the Emcee in "Cabaret," returns to the play that earned him an Aliw nomination in 2000. He will be joined by NVC resident actress Jenny Jamora, acclaimed for her dramatic and comic performances in Diana Son's "Stop Kiss" and Shaffer's "Sacrilege," respectively.

Directed by NVC resident director Rabbi Gannaban, the play opens on Feb. 25, Friday at 8 p.m. at the Republic of Malate, and runs until March 5, with Saturday matinee performances at 3 p.m. Light design by Martin Esteva and production design by Tuxqs Rutaquio.

Grief, revenge and forgiveness

We will be directing Bryony Lavery's "Frozen," one of Broadway's critical favorites last season. "Frozen" is a powerful and enlightening study on grief, revenge and forgiveness, about a mother who patiently waits for the return of her missing 10-year-old daughter, her eventual meeting with an unrepentant, sex-crime serial offender, and his troubled psychiatrist. It features Wilson, Jamora and Roselyn Perez (who, with Leo Rialp, leads the touring cast of "Sacrilege"), and runs from Sept. 9 to 17.

Andrew Lloyd Webber's well-loved musical, "Aspects of Love," which includes the hit song, "Love Changes Everything," comes to Manila from Nov 18 to 26. Monique Wilson directs and Dexter Santos choreographs.

The NVC Actors Studio Production, successfully launched last year with the hit staging of Rolando Tinio's Filipino adaptation of Samuel Beckett's "Waiting for Godot," will mount Jean Anouilh's adaptation of Sophocles' Greek tragedy, "Antigone," on May 21.

International market

New Voice resumes its forays in the international market with the second Tokyo run of Eve Ensler's "The Vagina Monologues," featuring Wilson, Jamora and Lynn Sherman in the English cast, and Chizuro Onoyama and Koko Furuta in the Japanese translation, from May 27 to June 4 at the Theater V.

Finally, NVC goes global when it launches its London arm in July, featuring an original Filipino adaptation of "To Be A Woman Is To Live At A Time of War," a devised theatrical collage of the poetry of Palanca-winning playwright Joi Barrios.

The 2005 NVC Summer Theater Workshops for kids, teens and adults will begin on March 28 at the NVC Actors Studio. We will be handling a special by-audition-only Musical Theater class.

Call 896-5497 or 896-6695.

JAMORA (TOP) AND WILSON. Portray five characters each in controversial David Hare play.

Facts vs thrills in crime show

By Noelani Torre

NOTHING gets past TV cops. At the end of the day, after an adrenalin-pumping high-speed chase or a high-tech forensic investigation, bad guys are found, caught and put behind bars.

However, things aren't as cut-and-dried in real life, nor are they as exciting.

Clues

In the real world, investigations take months—years, even—and crime scenes don't have all the clues. This is the reality revealed to us by the National Geographic Channel's "Interpol Investigates."

For those who haven't heard of Interpol, NG tells us that it is "a unique player in law enforcement, a voluntary global alliance that traces its roots to 1923, when Vienna's chief of police gathered his counterparts in 20 countries to share crime tips and expertise."

Global

Crime has gone global nowadays, necessitating international cooperation. With 181 member countries and its own group of investigators, it is Interpol's goal to foster this cooperation between investigative teams and countries that have different laws and customs.

"Interpol Investigates" is no thrill-a-minute cops and robbers show. This is still a National Geographic production, after all, and the thrills take the back seat to the facts. The

FACTS/ A2-5

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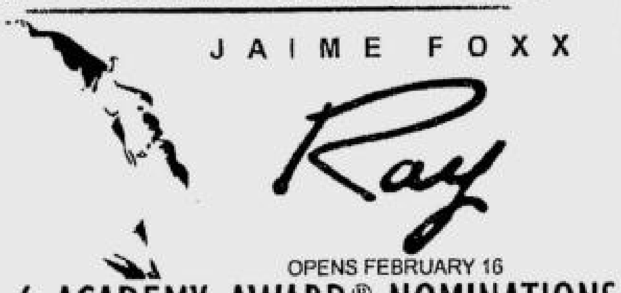
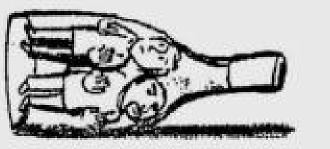
RAY **PG13** 1:15,4:15,7:15,10:20	**CONSTANTINE** **PG13** 1:30,4:10,6:50,9:50	**PHANTOM OF THE OPERA** **PG13** 1:30,4:20,7:10,10:00
SIDEWAYS **R18** 12:15,2:45,5:15,7:45,10:10	**SHALL WE DANCE** **GP** 1:00,3:15,5:30,7:45,10:00	**CONSTANTINE** **PG13** 11:50,2:30,5:10,7:50,10:30





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Araneta Center
Entertainment Guide

CINEMA SCHEDULES

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CONSTANTINE
12:00 / 2:30 / 5:00 / 7:30 / 10:00
SIDEWAYS
12:45 / 3:30 / 6:15 / 9:00
RAY - LIFE STORY OF RAY CHARLES
12:30 / 3:20 / 6:10 / 9:00
5 CHILDREN & IT
12:15 / 2:25 / 4:35
MEET THE FOCKERS
12:00 / 2:15 / 4:30 / 6:45 / 9:00
LET THE LOVE BEGIN
12:10 / 2:30 / 4:50 / 7:10 / 9:30
DREAM BOY
12:10 / 2:30 / 4:50 / 7:10 / 9:30
PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
1:00 / 3:50 / 6:40 / 9:30
SHALL WE DANCE
12:30 / 2:45 / 5:00 / 7:15 / 9:30
VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
6:50 / 9:30

ALI MALL CINEMAS

❶ LET THE LOVE BEGIN
11:00 / 1:20 / 3:40 / 6:00 / 8:20
❷ CONSTANTINE
11:00 / 1:15 / 3:45 / 6:15 / 8:45
❸ PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
11:50 / 2:40 / 5:30 / 8:20
❹ FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
12:05 / 2:10 / 4:15 / 6:20 / 8:25
❺ DREAM BOY
11:00 / 1:20 / 3:40 / 6:00 / 8:20
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GATEWAY CINEPLEX 10	*The Aviator* By Invitation Only Premiere *February 21*
ARANETA COLISEUM	*Fire Dance Spectacular February 22 to 27* *Jars of Clay: Show You Love March 2*
GATEWAY MALL	performance by *Mishka Adams February 25* *Rustan's Department Store Lifestyle & Home Exhibit extended up to February 20*
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2 (DOLBY)	SIDEWAYS *R18*
3 (DOLBY)	PHANTOM OF THE OPERA *PG13*
4 (DOLBY)	RAY *PG13*

PREMIERE

DOLBY)	CONSTANTINE *PG13*

Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216

1	CONSTANTINE
2	SOON TO OPEN
3	SOON TO OPEN
4	LET THE LOVE BEGIN

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
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1 (DOLBY)	RESERVED
2	RESERVED
3	RESERVED
4	RESERVED
5	RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
2	CONSTANTINE
3	DREAMBOY

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1	RESERVED
2	RESERVED
3	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	CONSTANTINE
5	SARANGGANI

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1	FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
2	SARANGANI
3	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4	DREAMBOY
5 (DOLBY)	CONSTANTINE
6	ELEKTRA

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas) tel (047) 237.7007

1 (DOLBY)	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
2	RESERVED

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DDS)	DREAMBOY
2 (SDDS)	SHALL WE DANCE
3 (DTS)	FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
4 (GOLD DTS)	CONSTANTINE
5 (GOLD (DOLBY)	PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
6 (GOLD (SDDS)	CONSTANTINE
7 (GOLD (DOLBY)	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
8 [illegible]	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
9 [illegible]	5 CHILDREN
10 [illegible]	SIDEWAY

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CONSTANTINE
SIDEWAYS
RAY
5 CHILFREN & IT
MEET THE FOCKERS
LET THE LOVE BEGIN
DREAMBOY
PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
SHALL WE DANCE
A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT

ALI MALL CINEMAS

1	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
2	CONSTANTINE
3	PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
4	FLIGHT ODF THE PHOENIX
5	DREAMBOY

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
2	CONSTANTINE
3	SARANGANI
4	

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1	

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	GEORGE & THE DRAGON
2	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 (DTS EX)	CONSTANTINE
4	DREAMBOY

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121

1	DREAMBOY
2	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 (DOLBY)	GEORGE & THE DRAGON
4 (DTS)	CONSTANTINE

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489

1	DREAMBOY
2	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 (DOLBY)	GEORGE & THE DRAGON
4 (DTS)	ELEKTRA

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	DREAMBOY
2	ELEKTRA

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City)
tel 687.6963 or 72

1 (DOLBY)	RAY
2 (DOLBY)	CONSTANTINE
3 (DOLBY)	PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
4 (DOLBY)	SIDEWAYS

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	CONSTANTINE
2 (DTS)	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 (DOLBY)	DREAMBOY
4	A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
2 (DOLBY)	A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
3 (DTS)	CONSTANTINE
4	DREAMBOY

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	DREAMBOY
2	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 (DOLBY)	ELEKTRA

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
2	DREAMBOY
3 (DOLBY)	A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
4 (DTS)	ELEKTRA

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3327

1	MEET THE FOCKERS
2	DREAMBOY
3 (DOLBY)	LET THE LOVE BEGIN

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	VERDICT
2	SARANGANI
3	IMPOTENT MAN
4 (DTS)	FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	CONSTANTINE
2	SARANGANI
3 (DTS)	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4	DREAMBOY
5	A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	DREAMBOY
2	MEET THE FOCKERS
3 (DTS)	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 (DOLBY)	A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	LET THE LOVE BEGIN
2	CONSTANTINE
3	MEET THE FOCKERS
4	DREAMBOY

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
2	DREAMBOY

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AYALA CINEMAS THX

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ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4		GB3 GREENBELT 3	ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU
1 CONSTANTINE	1 LET THE LOVE BEGIN	1 LET THE LOVE BEGIN	5 THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA	GUARANTEED SEATS 1 CONSTANTINE	1 CONSTANTINE
2 SIDEWAYS	2 CONSTANTINE	2 SIDEWAYS	6 CONSTANTINE	GUARANTEED SEATS 2 CONSTANTINE	2 WITHOUT A PADDLE
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN	3 5 CHILDREN & IT	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 CONSTANTINE	7 RAY	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA	3 ALEX & EMMA
4 DREAMBOY	4 DREAMBOY	4 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX		GUARANTEED SEATS 4 RAY	4 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
5 THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA				GUARANTEED SEATS 5 SIDEWAYS	5

GB1 GREENBELT 1
1 SIDEWAYS
2 CONSTANTINE

At the Activity Center

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
Justice League February 15-20, 2005	Toyota Launch February 18-20,2005	USC - College of Architecture & Fine Arts's 22nd Annual Exhibit Launching February 15, 2005

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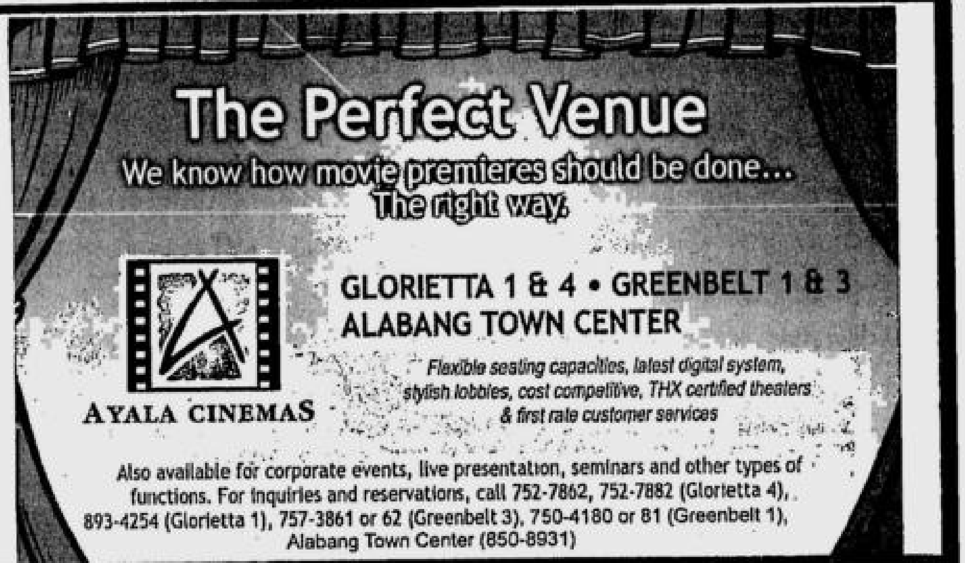
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Feb 17 & 18, 6PM
Feb 19, 11:30AM, 3PM & 6PM
Feb 20, 11:30AM, 2:30PM 4:30PM & 6:30PM
Feb 22, Meet&Greet Glorietta 2 lobby
Glorietta Activity Center
Customer Service Hotlines
Glorietta 752-7272
Greenbelt 752-4853 to 54

ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Feb 25 - 27, 11AM, 3PM & 6PM
Activity Center
Customer Service Hotlines
842-2782 & 772-1800

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March 4 - 5, 11AM, 4:30PM & 7PM
March 6, 11AM, 3:30PM & 6:30PM
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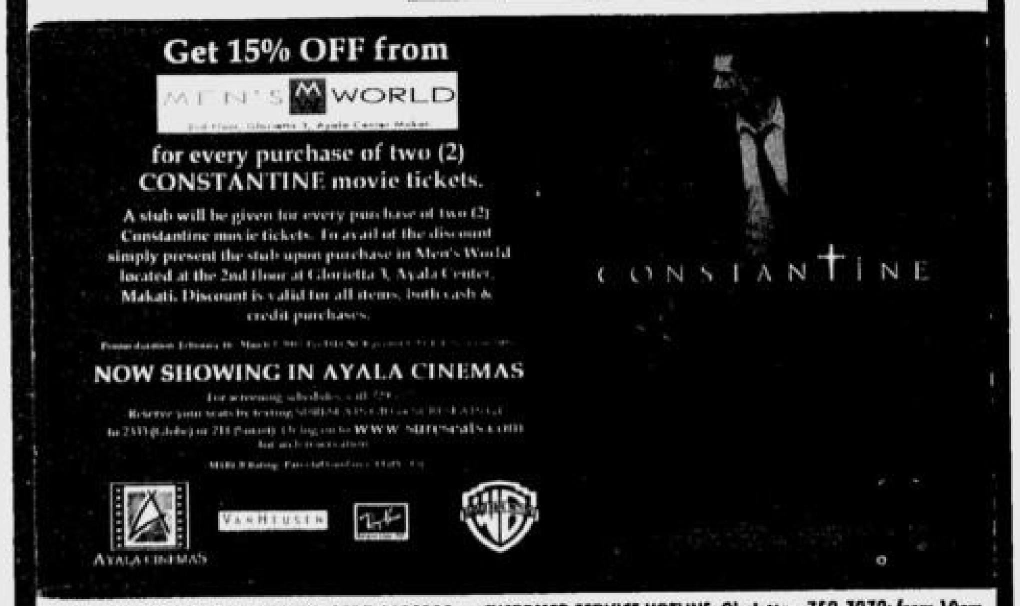

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MOVIES/SCHEDULES/PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

GALLERIA 632-9115/16

1 CONSTANTINE • THX 11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00
2 CONSTANTINE 10:50 1:30 4:10 6:50 9:30
3 RAY 11:05 1:55 4:45 7:35 10:00
4 5 CHILDREN AND IT 11:10 1:20 3:30
SHALL WE DANCE 5:30 7:00 9:30
5 LET THE LOVE BEGIN 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
6 SIDEWAYS 11:40 2:15 4:50 7:25 10:00
7 DREAMBOY 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
8 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA 1:15 4:10 7:05 10:00
9 MEET THE FOCKERS 1:05 3:20 5:35 7:50 10:00
10 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 CONSTANTINE 10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
2 5 CHILDREN AND IT 10:10 12:05 2:00 3:25
FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX 5:20 7:40 10:00
3 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA 10:20 1:05 4:00 6:55 9:50
4 DREAMBOY 10:10 12:30 2.50 5:10 7:30 9:50
5 SIDEWAYS 10:35 1:15 3:55
CONSTANTINE 9:20
6 LET THE LOVE BEGIN 10:15 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
7 ASSAULT ON PRECINT 13 10:20 12:30 2::50 5:10 7:30 9:50

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 5 CHILDREN AND IT 10:50 12:50 2:50
ASSAULT ON PRECINT 13 6:40 9:00
2 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA 12:15 3:15 6:15 9:15
3 SIDEWAYS 10:40 1:10 3:40 6:20 9:00
4 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX 11:20 1:45 4:05 6:30 9:00
5 CONSTANTINE 12:05 2:45 5:25 8:05 10:30
6 DREAMBOY 11:20 1:40 4:00 6:20 8:30 10:30
7 BATH HOUSE 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
8 LET THE LOVE BEGIN 12:05 2:45 5:25 8:05 10:30

NOVALICHES 935-3229/31

1 CONSTANTINE 11:50 2:40 5:30 8:25
2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN 11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:00
3 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA 11:20 2:20 5:20 8:25
4 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX 1:00 3:20 5:50 8:25
5 DREAMBOY 10:20 12:50 3:20 5:50 8:25
6 ALFIE 11:00 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 8:55
7 ELEKTRA 12:30 2:30 4:30 6:30 8:30
8 ASSAULT ON PRECINT 13 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 8:55

PIONEER 687-5378

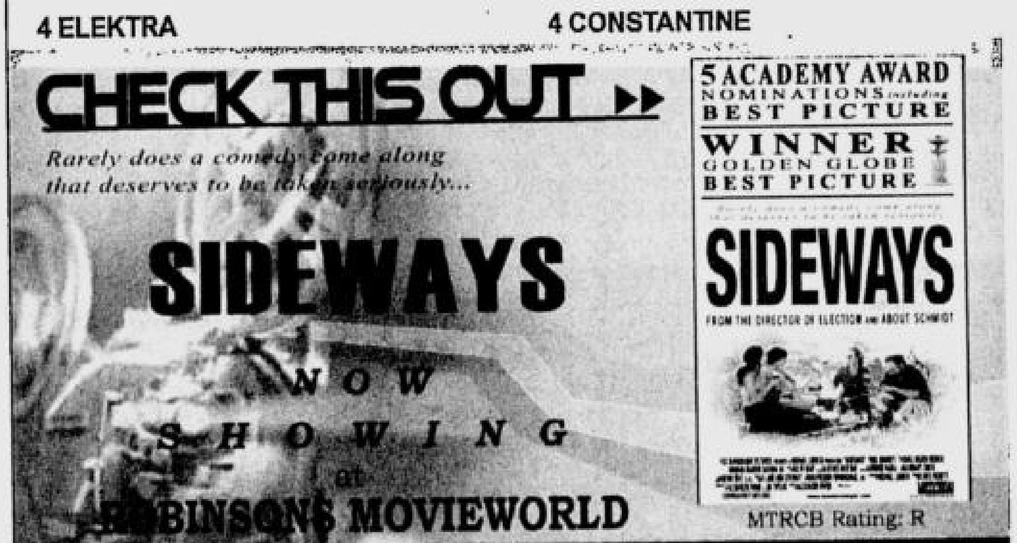
1 CONSTANTINE
2 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
3 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
4 LET THE LOVE BEGIN

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

1 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
2 DREAMBOY
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 ELEKTRA

CAINTA 240-4661

1 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
2 DREAMBOY
3 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
4 CONSTANTINE


CHECK THIS OUT ▸▸
Rarely does a comedy come along that deserves to be taken seriously...
SIDEWAYS
NOW SHOWING at ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD
5 ACADEMY AWARD NOMINATIONS including BEST PICTURE
WINNER GOLDEN GLOBE BEST PICTURE
SIDEWAYS
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF ELECTION and ABOUT SCHMIDT
MTRCB Rating: R

STA. ROSA (049) 837-0907

1 CONSTANTINE
2 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
3 ALFIE
4 DREAMBOY
5 LET THE LOVE BEGIN

LIPA (043) 757-3664 (043) 312-5870

1 CONSTANTINE
2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 FLIGHT OF PHOENIX
4 DREAMBOY
5 MEET THE FOCKERS

DASMARIÑAS (046) 852-2125 (046) 416-4332

1 DREAMBOY
2 ASSAULT ON PRECINT 13
3 CONSTANTINE
4 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
5 LET THE LOVE BEGIN

ANGELES (045) 892-2348

1 CONSTANTINE
2 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
3 DREAMBOY
4 GEORGE AND THE DRAGON

IMUS (046) 875-2898 (046) 471-8183

1 ALFIE
2 DREAMBOY
3 A VERY LONG ENGAGEMENT
4 CONSTANTINE
5 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
6 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 (045) 961-5270

1 IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE
2 DREAMBOY
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 SHALL WE DANCE
5 CONSTANTINE
6 ALFIE

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453 (034) 441-0499

1 MEET THE FOCKERS
2 CONSTANTINE
3 SHALL WE DANCE
4 IT'S ALL ABOUT LOVE
5 DREAMBOY
6 LET THE LOVE BEGIN

ILOILO (033) 336-8078

1 CONSTANTINE
2 KUNG FU HUSTLE
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
4 MEET THE FOCKERS
5 DREAMBOY
6 SHALL WE DANCE

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"INTERPOL INVESTIGATES." Unadorned facts can hold viewers' interest.

Facts...

From page A2-4

unadorned facts themselves can easily hold your interest, though, inasmuch as they concern serious crimes.

The show's maiden episode, "Rising Sun," featured the theft of several priceless paintings in France, and a seemingly unconnected bank heist in Japan.

Security

The crime took place in the '80s when people were just becoming aware of security issues—which was why thieves were able to just walk into a museum in broad daylight and cart off Monet's "Impression, Soleil Levant," the painting that gave impressionism its name.

"Interpol Investigates" doesn't only walk us through the crimes, it also examines varying cultural contexts that can hinder an investigation's success.

Among the problems that Interpol faces are varying extradition laws and political conflicts between countries.

Gruesome tale

The show also features grisly crimes. The episode, "Tracks of a Stalker," tells the gruesome tale of Sid Ahmed Rezala, a man responsible for the deaths of three women, two of whom he murdered while on a train.

Through dramatizations, interviews, and archival footage, the show stresses the real aspects of crimes, and their wide-ranging repercussions.

Their depiction of the investigative process remains honest all throughout, showing that criminals don't always get caught, people (and countries) don't always cooperate, and that what you need in order to solve a crime is a great deal of patience and tenacity.

DIESEL. Replaces his usual arsenal of weapons with diapers and juice boxes.

Travolta

From page A2-1

action-comedy, "The Pacifier." He plays a Navy SEAL who is assigned to protect the five out-of-control children of a scientist working on vital government secrets before he was assassinated.

Replacing his usual arsenal of weapons with diapers and juice boxes, Diesel has his hands full battling a deceptive foe, while having to contend with the bratty antics of his young wards!

CONTRACT signing with MTV Credit Card: (from left) Equitable's Teresita Tanbonliong, Sidebar Café's Maella Abaya and Dessa Gascon, and MTV's Terry Chua.

Mission accomplished

From page A2-7

Apostol, who won the talent competition of the Miss Philippines USA Pageant, received classical piano training under Dr. Rowena Arrieta, and vocal training from Kimberly Stern of Liz Caplan Vocal Studios in New York City.

She recently performed at the Sept. 11 memorial at the Philippine Pastoral Center, and at the Miss Teen Philippine USA pageant, where she served as a judge.

Partnership formalized

MTV Credit Card Equitable Bank has formalized its partnership with premiere establishments.

Equitable CardNetwork, together with MTV Asia, recently concluded signing a Memorandum of Agreement with retail giant Stores Specialists Inc. (SSI), which carries exclusive signature apparel brands (Armani Exchange, Calvin Klein jeans, Polo, Kenneth Cole, Colour 18, Nine West, Diesel, Springfield) and cosmetics (Beauty Bar and Lush); Fossil, crafters of inspired watches; G-Force and T-102; Quicksilver and Surfworld; Segafredo Zanetti, Bizu Patisserie, Temple Bar, Sidebar Café, Azzurro Bar & Restaurant, Pasto and Trio, and The Suriya Spa.

These establishments agree to extend great discounts, valuable perks, privileges and freebies exclusive to MTV Credit Card holders.

Log on to www.equitablecard.com/mtv, or call its 24-hour hotline at 867-7977 (Metro Manila) or 1-800-1-888-3264 (domestic toll-free).

Movies on TV

On HBO, Feb. 19 at 10:30 a.m., "Punch-Drunk Love." 2:55 p.m., "City by the Sea." 6:25 p.m., "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets." 9 p.m., "21 Grams." Feb. 20 at 7:45 a.m., "Sense and Sensibility." 6:30 p.m., "Babe." 8 p.m., "The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers." 10:55 p.m., "About Schmidt." Feb. 21 at 6 a.m., "The Remains of the Day." Feb. 22 at 8:25 p.m., "Mr. Deeds." Feb. 23 at 2 p.m., "Analyze That."

On Cinemax, Feb 19 at 6:30 a.m., "Bonnie and Clyde." Feb. 20 at 6 a.m., "Bill and Ted's Excellent Adventure." 2:45 p.m., "The Age of Innocence." 4 a.m., "For Whom the Bell Tolls." Feb. 21 at 9 p.m., "Owning Mahowny." 10:45 p.m., "The Godfather" Feb. 22 at 12:15 p.m., "Orange County." 7:30 p.m., "Mad Dog and Glory." Feb. 23 at 4;15 p.m., "Giant." 9 p.m., "Empire of the Sun." 3 a.m., "The Prince and the Showgirl."

'Sagot Ko 'Yan' in Baguio

On Feb. 19 and 20, radio talk show host Joel Lina's weekly program, "Sagot Ko 'Yan," broadcasts remote from Baguio City, in the face of its raging health controversy.

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit, Tourism Secretary Ace Durano and Baguio Mayor Braulio Yaranon join Lina in a town-hall asembly to clarify adverse health reports that 'have affected the thriving tourism industry in the country's summer capital.

"Sagot Ko 'Yan" is aired Saturdays at 8-9:30 a.m., and Saturdays at 8-9 a.m. on dzMM.

Boys II Men

On Feb. 26, hot boy band Boyz II Men will rock Manila with a live concert at the PSC-Ultra. Groove to their hits, "On Bended Knees," "I'll Make Love to You," "Water Runs Dry," "It's So Hard to Say Goodbye to Yesterday," etc. Call 891-9999.

Limited VIP tickets entitle patrons to a free copy of the group's latest CD, "Throwback," which they can have autographed in a meet-and-greet session with Boyz II Men at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel right after the concert.

End of the road at 'AI'. . .

From page A2-3

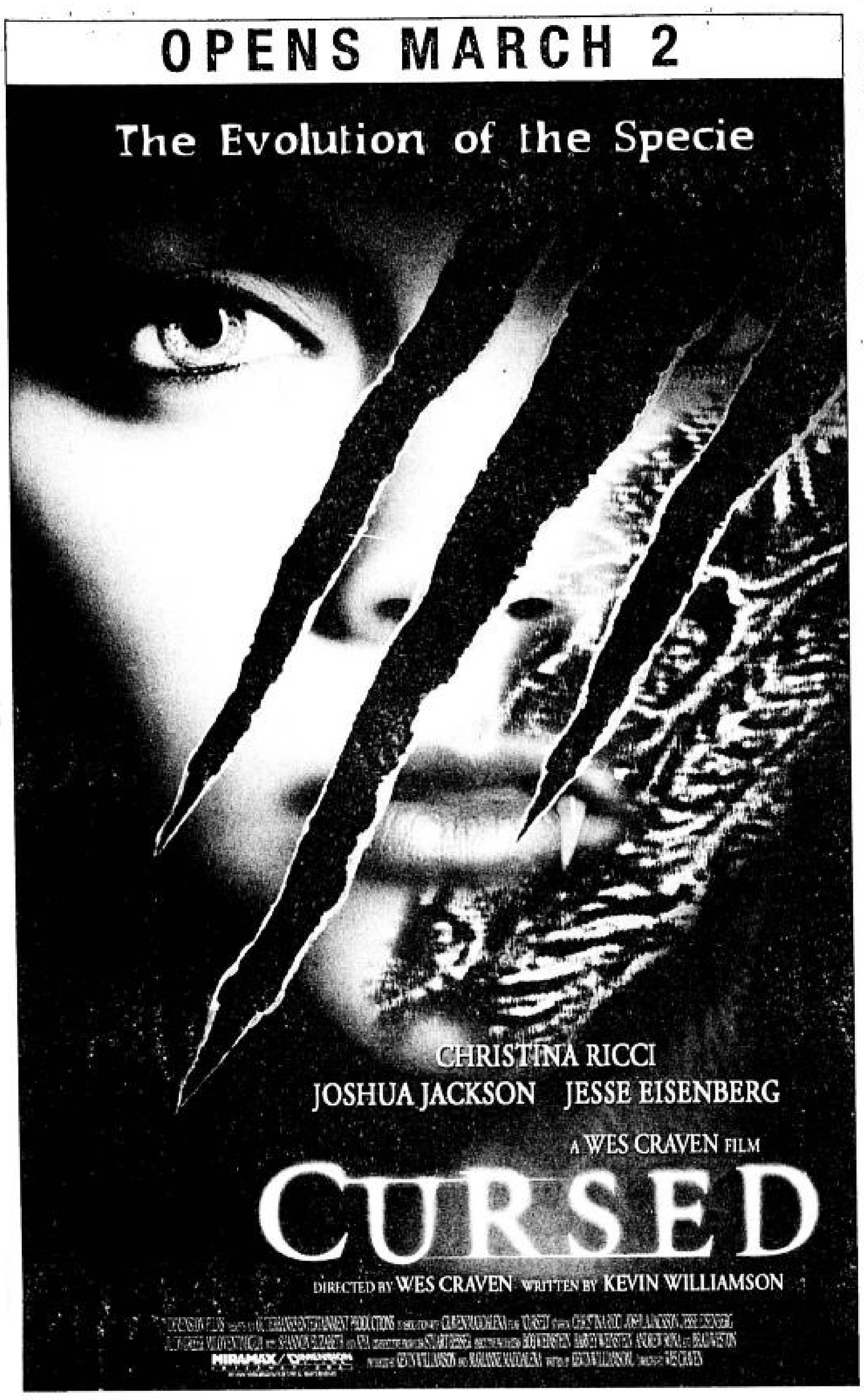
was nixed, and that was the end of the road for "our" Sharon Galvez.

Our spirits were dashed, of course, but not all the weeping and wailing in the world will change that deadly verdict. Tough luck, but we've lucked out.

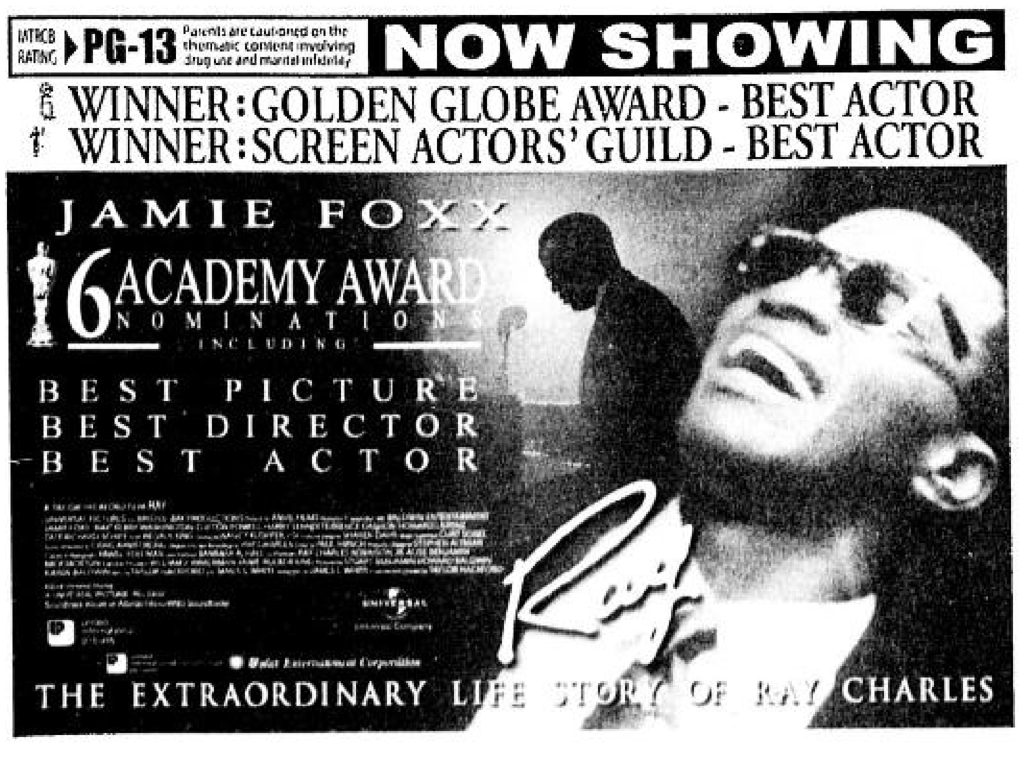
After we recovered, we looked around for any other possible Fil-Am among the 44 remaining survivors—but there was none.

In fact, we discovered with a shock that no *Asian* bet had made it at the end of last Wednesday's show!

Well, that's how the fortune cookie crumbles. And, so to paraphrase that old baseball quote from "Casey at the Bat" with a sigh and sniffle, "Alas, there's no joy in the Philippines today, because Sharon Galvez has struck out."


OPENS MARCH 2
The Evolution of the Specie
CHRISTINA RICCI
JOSHUA JACKSON JESSE EISENBERG
A WES CRAVEN FILM
CURSED
DIRECTED BY WES CRAVEN WRITTEN BY KEVIN WILLIAMSON
MIRAMAX

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
3 ACADEMY AWARDS NOMINATIONS
ART DIRECTION • CINEMATOGRAPHY • ORIGINAL SONG
3 GOLDEN GLOBE NOMINATIONS
BEST PICTURE • BEST ACTRESS • BEST ORIGINAL SONG
2ND WEEK
Andrew Lloyd Webber's classic tale of terror, mystery and romance, seen by over 8 million people worldwide, comes to the big screen for the first time.
The PHANTOM of the OPERA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NOW SHOWING
WINNER: GOLDEN GLOBE AWARD - BEST ACTOR
WINNER: SCREEN ACTORS' GUILD - BEST ACTOR
JAMIE FOXX
6 ACADEMY AWARD NOMINATIONS INCLUDING
BEST PICTURE
BEST DIRECTOR
BEST ACTOR
Ray
Solar Entertainment Corporation
THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE STORY OF RAY CHARLES

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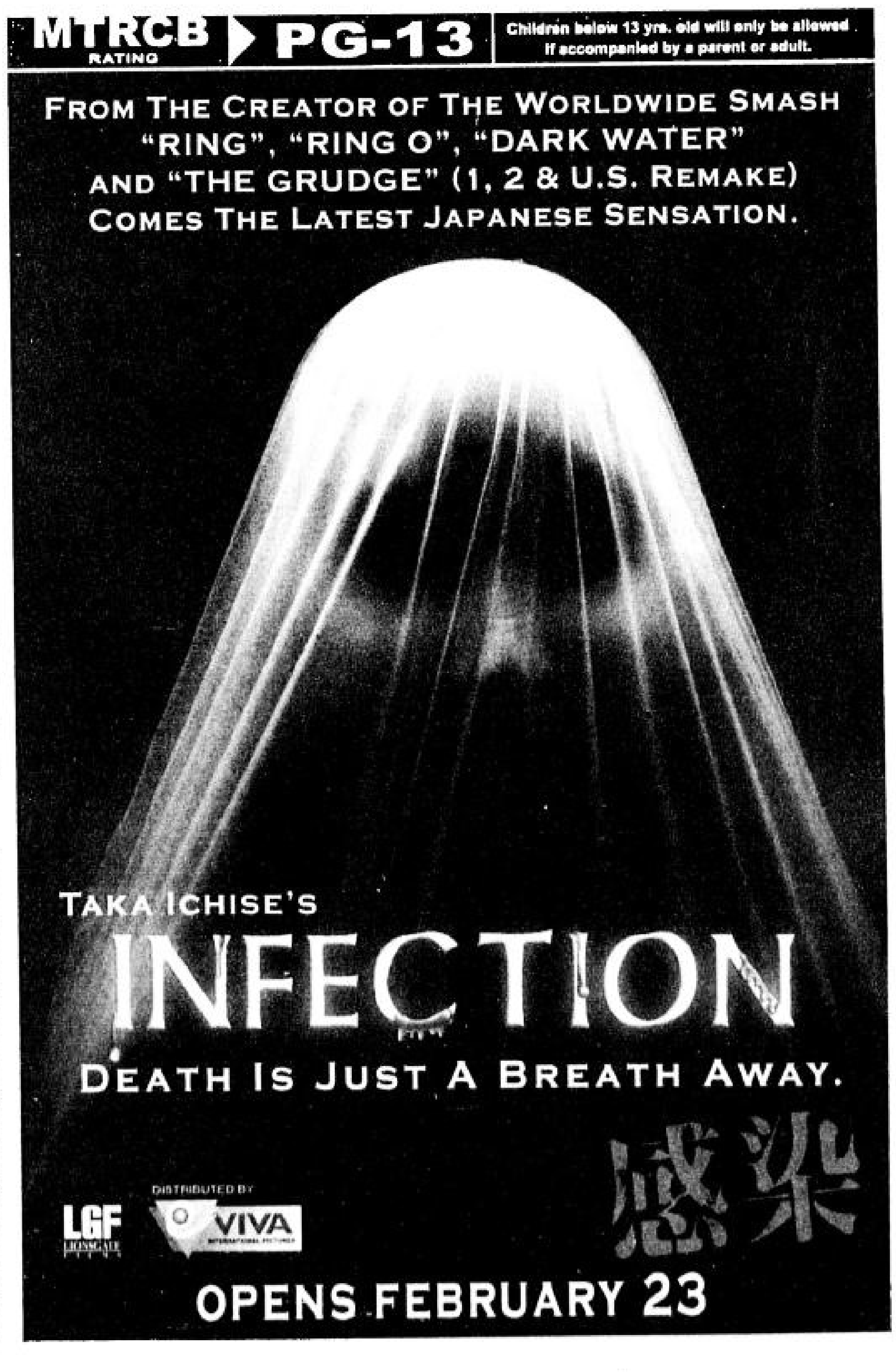
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MONTAGE

MISS PHILIPPINES USA, Barbara Jean Apostol, was in the Philippines recently for an 11-day visit, her prize for winning the beauty pageant sponsored by the Philippine American Communities Executive Council Inc. (Pacec) in the eastern seaboard of the United States.

A cum laude graduate of Boston College and now a first year student at Hofstra University College of Law, Apostol joined the pageant with the grand prize in mind. She was eight years old when she first visited the Philippines.

Now, 16 years later, her mission is to know more about her parents' homeland.

Through the courtesy of the Department of Tourism, she saw many historical sites: Intramuros, Kawit, Cavite and Corregidor—and toured the cities of Manila and Makati.

She was privileged to meet former President Fidel V. Ramos, Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay, Tourism Secretary Ace Durano, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye and former Interior Secretary Joey Lina.

She was the special guest at the town fiesta of San Pablo City, her mother's hometown.

With a lot of Philippine history and culture squeezed into an 11-day period, she returned to New York happy and proud.

"During my visit, I experienced firsthand the Filipino way that has carried over to Filipino-American households. I learned that Filipinos have the ability to overcome obstacles and strengthen themselves in the face of adversity. They prevail as a result of their perseverance—just like my parents when they went to America in the early 1970s."

MISS PHILIPPINE

APOSTOL (RIGHT), WITH FORMER PRESIDENT RAMOS. Proud of her Filipino roots.

The Long Island-born beauty is the daughter of Antonio Apostol (Marinduque) and Abecinia Chumacera Apostol (San Pablo City).

At the Hofstra University School of Law, she is vice president of Communications for the Asia Pacific American Law Students Association. She will pursue a legal career in the private sector.

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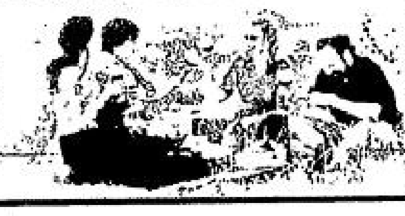
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Top bets gear up for Oscars

SHOW BIZ Q & A

Rito P. Asilo

FROM Wilma Catalino: "I'm watching the race for the Oscars very closely. Who are the probable winners of the Academy's golden statuettes this year?"

We're pre-paring a piece about this year's leading contenders, Wilma. For this week, however, we collated the top picks of some 14 award-giving bodies, namely critics' groups from New York, LA, New York Online, Boston, San Francisco, Washington, the Broadcast, Online and the National Society of Film Critics, as well as winners at the Golden Globe, National Board of Review, the Directors and Producers Guilds, and the Bafta.

These groups may reflect the leading contenders at the 77th Annual Academy Awards on Feb. 27, but unpopular nominees and dark-horse entries are known to have pulled surprises throughout the years.

BEST actress nominees: (from left) Hilary Swank, Annette Bening, Imelda Staunton, Kate Winslet and Catalina Sandino Moreno.

Influential

For best film, Alexander Payne's "Sideways" is the critics' choice, earning nods from seven groups, including a Golden Globe win in the comedy-musical category. Martin Scorsese's "The Aviator," however, was the top pick at the influential Producers Guild, the Bafta, and the Golden Globe for drama.

Michel Gondry's "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind" has won two, while Clint Eastwood's "Million Dollar Baby" and Marc Forster's "Finding Neverland" has one nod each.

The best director plum is a toss up between Eastwood ("Baby"), who has already triumphed in 1993 for "Unforgiven," and Scorsese ("The Aviator"), said to be America's greatest living director—who, ironically, has *never* won an Oscar, despite seven nominations (five for his direction)! Eastwood was the big winner at the Directors Guild, the Globes and the New York Film Critics.

Scorsese, Payne ("Sideways") and Gondry ("Eternal Sunshine") have two nods, and one each for "Vera Drake's" Mike Leigh—at the Bafta—and "Collateral's" Michael Mann, given by the National Board of Review. Zhang Yimou won separate plums for "House of Flying Daggers" and "Hero."

JAMIE FOXX AS RAY CHARLES. A sure thing in the best actor category?

Oddsmakers are saying it's a lock for Jamie Foxx ("Ray"), who's also nominated in the supporting actor category ("Collateral"). He has so far amassed eight best actor awards, including wins from the Globes, Screen Actors Guild and the Bafta. Leonardo DiCaprio may have won the Globe's drama category, but Paul Giamatti ("Sideways") has four nods. Liam Neeson was cited in LA for "Kinsey."

Duel

For best actress, Hilary Swank ("Million Dollar Baby") slugs it out again with Annette Bening ("Being Julia") after their duel in 2000 for their performances in "Boys Don't Cry" and "American Beauty," respectively. (Swank won.)

For "Baby," Hilary has to date bagged five trophies, including those from the Golden Globe and SAG, while Bening has two.

But, Swank's toughest competitor is really "Vera Drake's" Imelda Staunton, who has copped six awards—one trophy more than Swank's! Kate Winslet ("Eternal Sunshine") and Julie Delpy ("Before Sunset") have one each.

For the supporting actor category, "Sideways'" Thomas Haden Church may have collected eight trophies, but Clive Owen has three substantial ones: a Golden Globe and Bafta for his performance in Mike Nichols' "Closer," and one (from the NYFC) for the little-seen "A Mighty Wind." Morgan Freeman ("Million Dollar Baby") won at the SAG, and Jamie Foxx ("Collateral") in Washington.

Among supporting actresses, Virginia Madsen ("Sideways") was cited in six; Laura Dern ("We Don't Live Here Anymore") and Laura Linney ("Kinsey") have one each, and so does Natalie Portman ("Closer"), who won hers at the Golden Globe.

Lucky year

But, this may be Cate Blanchett's lucky year: Her performance in "The Aviator," as Katharine Hepburn, has already won four, including nods from the SAG and Bafta.

Notable winners for the best foreign language film category are: Zhang Yimou's "House of Flying Daggers" and "Hero"; Joshua Marston's "Maria, Full of Grace"; the controversial Javier Bardem starrer "The Sea Inside," and two films starring Mexican heartthrob Gael Garcia Bernal: Walter Salles' "The Motorcycle Diaries" and Pedro Almodovar's "Bad Education."

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VISA
All it takes.

Alexander Payne's Oscar bait, Keanu Reeves' demonic date

By Rito P. Asilo

REEVES in a scene from Francis Lawrence's paranormal thriller, "Constantine."

"Sideways"

D: Alexander Payne
S: Paul Giamatti, Thomas Haden Church, Virginia Madsen

Sometimes, the best part of a trip is not the destination, but the journey toward it. For bosom buddies Miles (Paul Giamatti), a depressed high school English teacher and frustrated novelist, and Jack (Thomas Haden Church), a flippant former TV actor now reduced to doing infomercials, their week-long bonding and wine-tasting excursion to California's grape country before the latter takes the marital plunge becomes more than just an exercise in friendship and bachelorhood.

Wine connoisseur Miles is distraught over a marriage that ended in divorce two years earlier, but he continues to pine for his ex-wife, who has since found a new husband. He anxiously awaits a publisher's positive decision over his unreleased novel that will light a spark in his otherwise stagnant life.

On the other hand, Jack is determined to celebrate the last days of his single life with consensual sex with strangers, and is convinced that casual flings will brighten Miles' dark, moody disposition.

When the boys meet the beautiful but lonely Maya (Virginia Madsen), a divorcee who is drawn to Miles' sadness and his passion for wine, and the worldly, sexually-driven Stephanie (Sandra Oh), things begin to heat up.

Alexander Payne's thoughtful, elegant comedy—this year's "Lost in Translation"—shines with its painful but life-affirming moments of self-evaluation: From Miles' drunken plea for a second chance to his ex-wife, and his pained, eventual acceptance over things he can't change, to Jack's guilt-driven breakdown upon realizing what he stands to lose.

The strengths and flaws of "Sideways'" rich, compelling characters are limned with moving, knowing restraint by its superb ensemble.

Through these characters, the movie finds rough beauty and strength in the unwise decisions that people make—and from the precious lessons we learn from committing mistakes.

"Lost in Translation's" indelible ending may have left us wondering what heartbreak awaited Bill Murray and Scarlett Johansson's characters as he tenderly but inaudibly whispered goodbye to her, but "Sideways'" finale leaves us hopeful as Miles knocks on Maya's door for his second chance at love—and redemption.

"Constantine"

D: Francis Lawrence
S: Keanu Reeves, Rachel Weisz

The best technical minds in filmmaking can only do so much to save a bad script. So, when we got separate invitations from Jay Gonzales and Star World to advance screenings of Reeves' latest sci-fi caper, we had misgivings. Yes, Neo may have kicked ass, but Johnny Mnemonic and "The Devil's Advocate" didn't.

This time, though, we were glad that our hunch was wrong. Instead, we were regaled by a noirish, quasi-religious thriller—adapted from the comic book "Hellblazer"—that features the consistently convincing Rachel Weisz (in a dual role) and the dashing Mr. Reeves playing a character that conceals his limitations as an actor.

Keanu portrays cancer-stricken, chain-smoking John Constantine, whose tormented soul is doomed after he unsuccessfully takes his life to escape his disturbing metahuman gifts: He sees ghosts, angels and demons!

Hoping to earn his way back to salvation, he exterminates evil forces, but his time is running out—and pesky police investigator Angela (Weisz), herself haunted by the apparent suicide of twin sister Isabel, is hot on his tail.

When he finds himself in a tight fix with the devil, John prays: "I know I am not welcome in your house, but I can use some attention..." Tell me you can't relate.

Despite a hokey, feeble ending, Francis Lawrence delivers a fast-paced, sumptuous visual treat that puts a refreshing albeit preposterous spin on the mythology (and reality) of angels and demons, and of heaven and hell.

It's foolhardy to intellectualize too much while watching this stylish yarn, so just sit back and enjoy the glorious, demon-busting ride. Besides, we may never have outgrown our adolescent attachment to our favorite comic-book heroes—but, we don't take them seriously, do we?

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ALONZO AND PASCUAL. She's far too pretty for her role; he lacks dynamism, empathy and versatility.

Two Valentine movies compared

By Nestor U. Torre

LAST Jan. 9, two romantic movies opened in town, just in time for Valentine's Day—Star Cinema's "Dreamboy" and GMA Films' "Let the Love Begin." Before the two films started their "lovely" run in most of the cineplexes in Metro Manila, industry people were speculating about which movie would turn out to be the bigger hit.

Asked for our "educated" guess on the subject, we opined that "Let the Love Begin" was "it," primarily because its leads, Richard Gutierrez, Angel Locsin, Jennylyn Mercado and Mark Herras are very visible on TV these days.

Constant exposure

"Dreamboy's" Piolo Pascual and Bea Alonzo are popular in their own right, but nothing beats constant exposure on television for maximum impact on show biz fans, so . . .

Well, it turns out that our hunch was right, and GMA Films' production is topping the box office these days.

But, how do the two movies compare to each other in terms of *quality*? Take note that both of them got a grade of "B" from the Cinema Evaluation Board, which means that the two productions have been perceived by the CEB to have tried to do better than the usual romantic flick.

OK, so both of them pass muster—but, which is the better film? Lets' see:

"Dreamboy" is about a very pretty girl in a blue collar job (Bea Alonzo) who is suddenly courted by her company's top honcho (Piolo Pascual). Just as suddenly, however, he drops out of her life, possibly due to family pressure.

Still nursing a bruised heart, Bea's character next meets a tough and rough character who just happens to look like Piolo. Despite her better instincts, she ends up liking him as well—until she's dissuaded by a shocking revelation.

Bucolic province

Finally, Bea meets a third beau, a nice, middle-class kind of guy with a mom in a bucolic province—who *again* looks like Piolo. What's going on here?! Bea likes this guy, too—but she's not about to make the same "mistake" three times in a row!

—Until it's finally revealed that everything that's happened to her and the three Piolo look-alikes is part of a big, complicated—ah, but to tell you more would be snitching, so let's leave it at that.

On point of plotting, it's clear that "Dreamboy" is unique—and that's all to the good. Except that the way its interesting story is told leaves a lot to be desired.

Menial job

Some of the problems involve Bea's character, her miscasting, and the lack of believability in her actuations. Like, she's far too pretty to be holding such a menial job, and she looks too intelligent not to see through the ruse involving the three Piolo lookalikes.

As for Piolo, his problems include lack of dynamism, empathy, and versatility. His role requires a very wide acting range, which unfortunately the actor doesn't possess.

In addition, there isn't enough chemistry between Piolo and Bea to imbue this movie with the requisite romantic heart and glow.

(To be concluded)

'Amazing Race 6' lives up to hype

KEOGHAN. Host of popular reality TV show.

By Sharon Wendy A. Robas

I WASN'T a fan of the reality TV show, "The Amazing Race," until it had a brief stop in the Philippines last year. Since then, I become curious about how teams raced to different continents and performed demanding tasks for the coveted $1-million prize. I decided to watch one of the races soon.

So, I viewed the "The Amazing Race 6," hosted by Phil Keoghan. Participating teams were diverse and interesting: best friends, pro wrestlers, actors, models and—hold your breath—grandparents in their 60s!

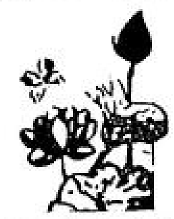
Exciting

Since it was a race, betting on particular teams made viewing more exciting. My heart went out to grandparents Don and Mary Jean, and the father and daughter team of Gus and Hera, because I admired their

AMAZING/ A3-3

Natural remedies

LOTUS POND



R. Valencia and S. Bismark

THERE are natural remedies that work so well that they're handed down through generations. Joy Laundy includes some of them in her book, "Back to Basics":

Blackhead treatment: Put warm mashed potato in a cheesecloth, and apply to a stubborn blackhead several times a day. Clean skin is the best preventive measure. Wash face twice daily with medicated soap to prevent oil build-up.

Pain relief

Bruises: Relieve the pain by applying dry starch moistened with water. Ice packs or a cloth soaked in vinegar tied over the area also bring pain relief.

Cough mixture: Stir the juice of a lemon with two or three teaspoons of honey into boiling water. Sip often, hot or cold.

Eye puffiness, bags and black circles: Reduce puffiness by lying down for five minutes with a slice of cucumber over each eye. Banish bags under the eyes by wrapping frozen vegetables in a towel over your eyes. Minimize dark circles by grating a potato on two small cotton squares. Lie down and lay a cotton square over each eye.

Garlic-breath banisher: When serving food cooked with garlic, always give each person a sprig of parsley. If eaten after the meal, it will counteract garlic breath.

Massage

Head cold cures: A cold disappears quickly if, before going to bed, you massage vapor rub on your feet, then cover with socks. Or, rub a fresh clove of garlic into the soles of your feet for eight to 10 minutes. Put on shoes and socks, then breathe easy!

Indigestion: Dissolve half a teaspoon of bicarb in a glass of hot water, and sip to fight off indigestion. After each meal, swallow honey with nutmeg oil.

Insomnia: Have a relaxing bath. Sip chamomile tea or warm milk before sleeping. Sprinkle drops of essential oil of lavender or orange on your pillowcase.

Nasal congestion: if you're having trouble sleeping due to nasal congestion, put a few drops of eucalyptus or lavender oil into a saucer near your bed. This will help you breathe easier.

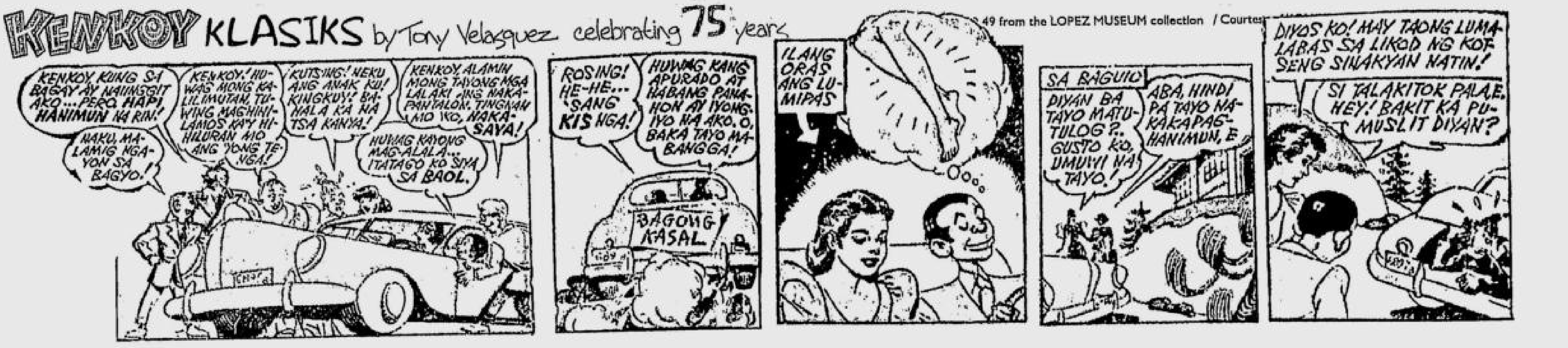
Restless

Pick me up: Next time you feel tired and restless, dissolve a spoonful of honey in a cup of hot milk, and add a sprinkling of nutmeg. Honey energizes, and nutmeg stimulates.

Tension headaches: This is a clear sign that you need a break—so, take the time out. Take a few deep breaths, then inhale and stretch your arms toward the ceiling. Exhale and drop forward, allowing arms and hands to dangle limply. Repeat several times, and imagine the tension being blown out with each exhalation.

I got my copy of Joy Laundy's book at Goodwill Bookstore.

Email lotuspond108@hotmail.com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KENKOY, ALAMIN MONG TAYONG MGA LALAKI ANG NAKAPANTALON. TINGNAN MO KO, NAKASAYA!
HUWAG KAYONG MAG-ALALA... ITATAGO KO SIYA SA BAOL.
ROSING! HE-HE... 'SANG KIS NGA!
HUWAG KANG APURADO AT HABANG PANAHON AY IYONG IYO NA AKO. O, BAKA TAYO MABANGGA!
BAGONG KASAL
ILANG ORAS ANG LUMIPAS
Oooo
SA BAGUIO
DIYAN BA TAYO MATUTULOG?.. GUSTO KO, UMUWI NA TAYO!
ABA, HINDI PA TAYO NAKAKAPAGHANIMUN, E
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Ryan's songs at the Shang today

CAYABYAB. Giving good Filipino music its due.

By Nestor U. Torre

WHERE will you be at 5 p.m. today? We hope you will rearrange your schedule so you can be at the Shangri-La Edsa Mall, to catch Ryan Cayabyab conducting the San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra and the San Miguel Master Chorale, performing choice cuts from Ryan's new album, "Great Original Pilipino Music by Ryan Cayabyab."

Visionary commitment

We should support this free public performance because, when it comes to Ryan's visionary commitment to Filipino music and its audience (that's us), *attention must be paid.*

This, too, is to thank Ryan for soldiering on these past decades, never giving up the good fight and the important cause, despite our notoriously niggardly attitude when it comes to supporting our homegrown arts and artists.

Our infamous national colonial mentality is so deeply ingrained that it takes nothing less than courageous dedication from the likes of Ryan to uproot it from our compromised psyches, or at least to neutralize its effects, which continue to sap our collective creativity of the energy and integrity it needs to truly flourish.

Affirmation

So, take your families and friends with you to Ryan's concert, so that the Shang mall's performance area will be filled to bursting. That would serve as a visual affirmation of the rightness and importance of Ryan's innovative and visionary musical initiatives, of which this public performance is only a part. If pop music stars can draw crowds with their facile agenda, why can't Ryan with his deeply transformative performance?

While you're at it, why not also make it a point to get a copy of Ryan's new album? Not only will you help make it a hit, but you will also encourage recording companies to give good Filipino music its due with other showcases in the immediate future.

New album

Ryan's songs in his new album are impressively diverse in theme and style. They include two pieces ("Limang Dipang Tao" and "Tsismis") that choral groups just love to tackle because they're so vocally complex and challenging.

For romantic contrast, there's the softly lilting "Tuwing Umuulan at Kapiling Ka." "Paraiso" is from Ryan's Smokey Mountain period, about which public interest was recently revived due to the good showing on "American Idol" of one of its "alumnae," Sharon Galvez.

Romance again comes to the fore in "Iduyan Mo" and "Kahit Ika'y Panaginip Lang." For wacky novelty, there's "Da Coconut Nut." And still, other themes and styles are vivified with cuts like "Tunay na Ligaya," "Paraisong Parisukat," "Iniibig Kita" and "Awit ng Pagsinta."

Excitement

In our view, the song that best sums up Ryan's love for music is "Hibang sa Awit," which sings about the excitement that a "music-mad" singer feels when he's performing.

Well, you need to be a little "crazy" to go out on a limb for Filipino music, as Ryan has, despite the many obstacles involved. But, there's definitely method to Ryan's "madness," which is really passion, vision and commitment more than anything else.

If we support his innovative musical initiatives, success is only a matter of time, and we will all share in its rewards.

Original 'Phantom' remembered

By Behn Cervantes

"THE PHANTOM of the Opera," the hugely successful Webber musical, has finally been made into a film. It is even nominated for Oscars this year.

Hollywood aficionados will remember that the original "Phantom" film starred Lon Chaney. Born Alonzo Chaney to deaf-mute parents, he quickly learned to communicate without words and was adept at pantomine. He became one of silent cinema's foremost talents.

Loneliness

To escape loneliness in his parents' home, the youthful Lon found employment in the local opera house, where he got interested in stage make-up.

At age 17, Chaney toured the United States as an actor. He arrived in Hollywood in 1912, where he began as an extra.

The young actor's craggy features did not merit romantic leading man roles. So, he exploited his acquired skill in make-up and prosthetics to create memorable characters like a phony cripple in "The Miracle Man."

He quickly won critical praise, and starring vehicles were soon created for his special talent.

He is much-admired for his portrayal of Quasimodo in 1923's "The Hunchback of Notre Dame." For this character, he created a 20-pound harness to replicate the distorted back of the bizarre bell-ringer. It was his biggest success—until he shocked audiences with the ghoulish make-up he created for the "Phantom of the Paris Opera House." Some people thought he went overboard with the ghoulishness of his make-up, but it was to become his most popular film!

CHANEY. Adept at pantomime.

Emotional range

Critics happily noted the wide emotional range he could project despite heavy make-up.

Like many actors of the silent era, he was initially threatened by the onset of talking pictures, but in 1930, he made his first talkie, "The Unholy Three."

He eventually tried to play "straight" roles, but he is still best remembered for his "Phantom" character.

When you think of Lon Chaney these days, you will also remember Quasimodo, Dracula and the thousand other faces he created during his short but spectacular career.

'Amazing Race 6' lives up to hype

From page A3-2

courage against the sturdier, much younger teams.

As the race went on, one team after another got eliminated. Some viewers thought Don and Mary Jean would be eliminated on Day 1, but they raced on for a few more weeks before they got the boot. Gus and Hera soon followed. So, I had to pick new teams to cheer on.

I chose dating actors Hayden and Aaron, and engaged models Freddy and Kendra. I was drawn to these teams because they were competitive, and their teamwork worked to their advantage—particularly for Hayden and Aaron, who topped several pit stops.

Visual delight

The show was a visual delight. It gave viewers the opportunity to "travel" to exciting destinations: Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Senegal, Germany, Hungary, France, Ethiopia, Sri Lanka, China and the USA!

It was amusing, oftentimes annoying, how contestants would lose their cool as they tried to complete each task, "Roadblock" and "Detour." This race was not merely a test of physical and mental endurance, but of patience and perseverance, as well.

Married entrepreneurs Jonathan and Victoria were a notable pair. From the very start, Jonathan demonstrated his mean streak: He would endlessly bicker with his wife as if she couldn't do anything right! Even the other female contestants were affected by his cruelty to his wife.

Once, Victoria hurt her hand, but Jonathan insisted that she continue doing her task. Kendra got so upset that she yelled: "Jonathan, help her!" Thank goodness, they soon got eliminated!

Aaron and Hayden eventually got axed. But, she got the biggest surprise of her life when Aaron, down on his knee, asked her to marry him! For hopeless romantics, that was worth more than the million-dollar prize!

The close fight finally saw engaged models Freddy Holliday and Kendra Bentley triumph at the finish line.—*What a race!*

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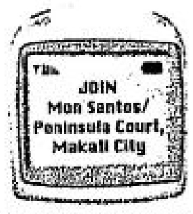

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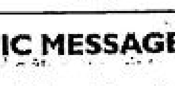
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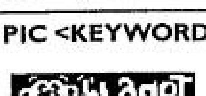
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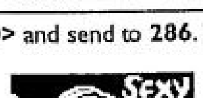
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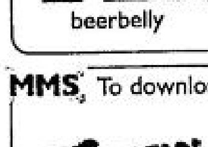
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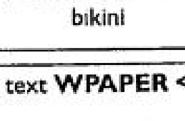
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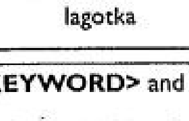
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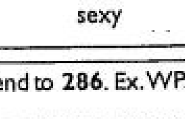
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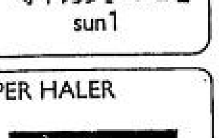
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BSP survey shows optimism picking up

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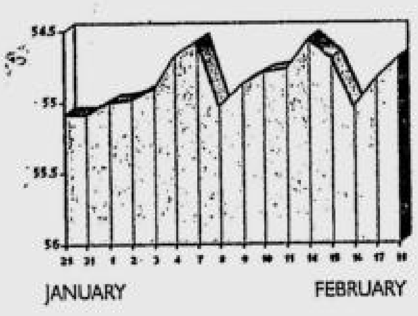

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United States	Dollar	0.764994	1.000000	54.9770
Japan	Yen	0.007251	0.009478	0.5211
United Kingdom	Pound	1.449740	1.895100	104.1869
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.098081	0.128212	7.0487
Switzerland	Franc	0.646274	0.844809	46.4451
Canada	Dollar	0.622351	0.813537	44.7258
Singapore	Dollar	0.466659	0.610016	33.5368
Australia	Dollar	0.603450	0.788830	43.3675
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.029269	2.652661	145.8353
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.203993	0.266660	14.6602
Brunei	Dollar	0.465240	0.608162	33.4349
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000083	0.000108	0.0059
Thailand	Baht	0.019852	0.025950	1.4267
UAE	Dirham	0.208286	0.272272	14.9687
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.307200	71.8659
Argentina	Peso	0.263654	0.344649	18.9478
Brazil	Real	0.298592	0.390320	21.4586
Denmark	Kroner	0.134332	0.175599	9.6539
India	Rupee	0.017510	0.022889	1.2584
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.201341	0.263193	14.4696
Mexico	New Peso	0.069074	0.090293	4.9640
New Zealand	Dollar	0.549722	0.718597	39.5063
Norway	Kroner	0.120288	0.157240	8.6446
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012894	0.016855	0.9266
South Africa	Rand	0.129441	0.169205	9.3024
Korea	Won	0.000747	0.000976	0.0537
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024251	0.031701	1.7428

STOCK MARKET

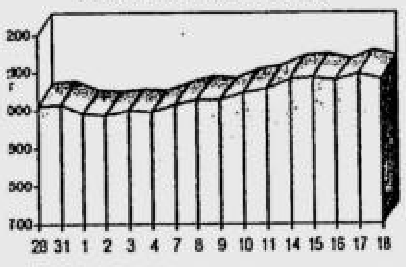
Shares end lower on technical correction

SHARES ended lower yesterday as investors took profits following recent gains, traders said.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index ended down 11.06 points, or 0.5 percent, at 2,085.93, after Thursday's 1-percent rise to its best finish in more than five years. Decliners led gainers 76 to 48, while 45 stocks were unchanged.

SHARES/ B2

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



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BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the optimism for the second quarter "could be explained by the fact that consumption expenditures usually increase during the opening of the schoolyear and the harvest season, which contribute to brisk business activity."

Respondents attributed the improvement in their business optimism to increased market demand both here and abroad, the appreciation of the peso, political and fiscal reforms, their own business expansions, increase in tourist arrivals and improvement in their business operations, plans and strategies.

Recently, Malacañang recruited new senior economic managers from the private sector while Cesar Purisima, former trade secretary, was transferred to the finance department. At the same time, several key tax reform measures have been passed by Congress.

Since the start of the year, strong portfolio inflow has jacked up the peso to the P54-to-$1 level for the first time since October 2003.

BSP Assistant Governor Diwa Guinigundo said: "With these positive factors, it could be expected that exports and domestic consumption would increase and more foreign investments would come in during the first half of the year," he added.

The DI is the percentage share of firms that answered in the affirmative less those that answered negative in a given indicator. A positive DI indicates a favorable view when measuring confidence levels.

The BSP's survey, conducted from Jan. 12 to Feb. 9, had 510 respondents from representative sectors—industry, construction, wholesale/retail trade and services—of which 73 percent came from the National Capital Region.

Of these sectors, the confidence index for the construction sector was most bullish at 50 percent while the indices for services and industry sectors were likewise optimistic at 22.4 percent and 8.1 percent, respectively.

Only the trade sector registered a negative confidence index of 7.1 percent, which was attributed by the BSP to seasonal factors.

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However, high oil prices, rising inflation and the large fiscal deficit continued to be the major macroeconomic concerns cited by the survey respondents.

"In addition, slower growth in major economies and downturns in the high-tech and commodity cycles are seen to constrain economic activity in the future," Buenaventura said.

Other risks cited were stiff competition and insufficient demand, unclear economic laws (particularly the complicated tax structure), high interest rates, financial problems and poor access to credit.

Ayala eyes listing of IT unit

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

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AYALA/ B2

ZOBEL DE AYALA II

Local group shuns foreign bond mart

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This will insulate the country's largest conglomerate from possible higher borrowing costs in the international debt market that may arise from the latest cut by Moody's Investors Service of the country's sovereign debt rating.

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Ayala is also backed by a $300-million cash pile which it can tap to settle liabilities.

"Moody's rating is not supposed to affect us because we don't foresee ourselves tapping the international market for a bond issue anytime soon. Likewise, we have done most of our pre-funding last year, actually focusing on the peso," Opulencia said. He added that Ayala has shifted most of its borrowings to peso loans. Where before Ayala used to source 90 percent of its liabilities from the US market, by the end of January, its dollar borrowings have dropped to 52 percent.

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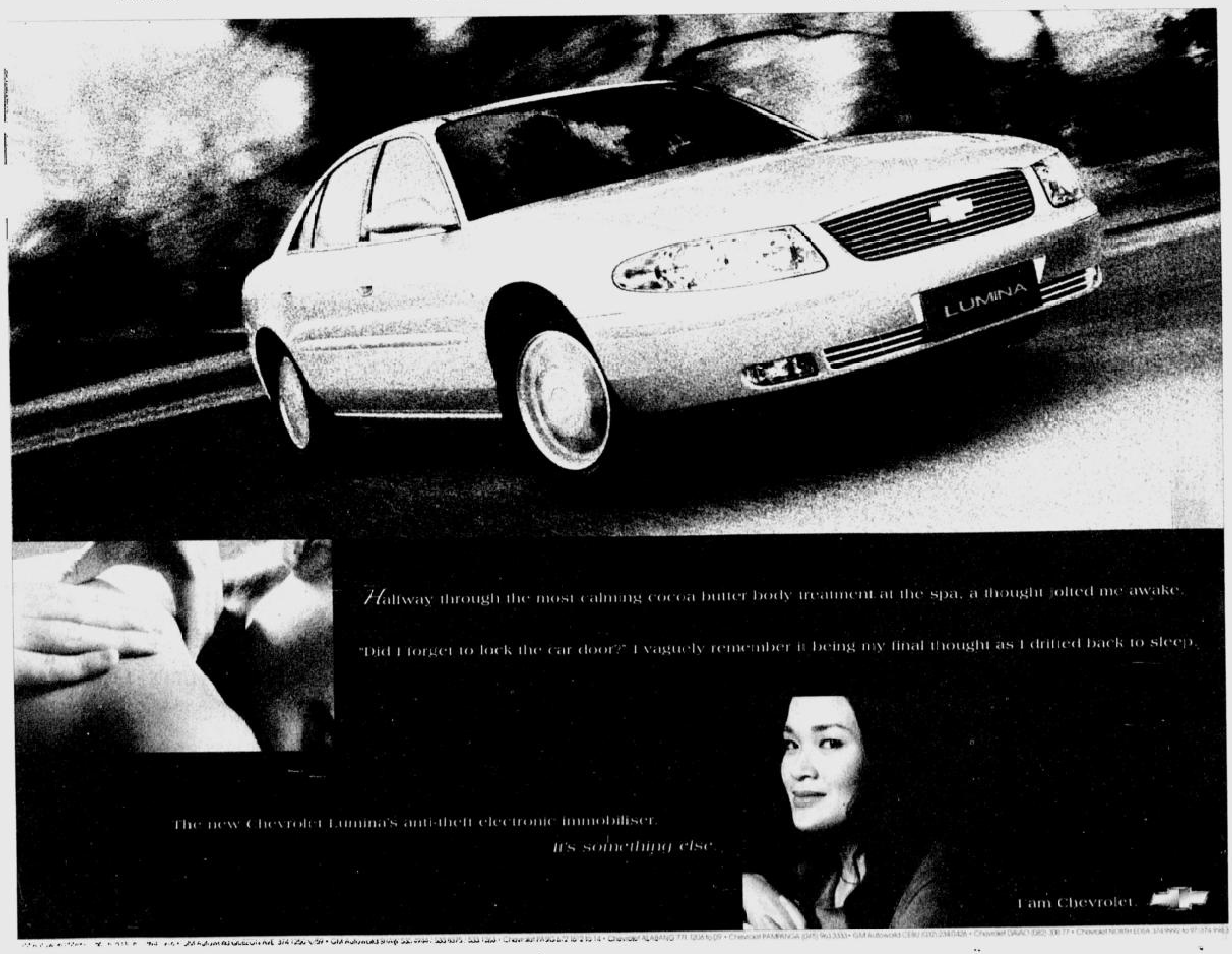
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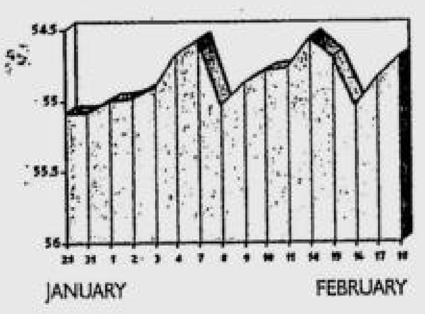

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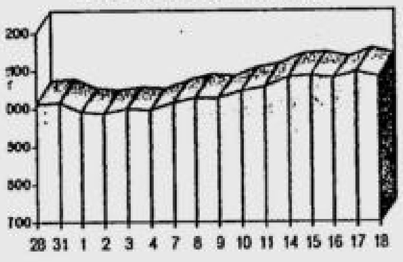

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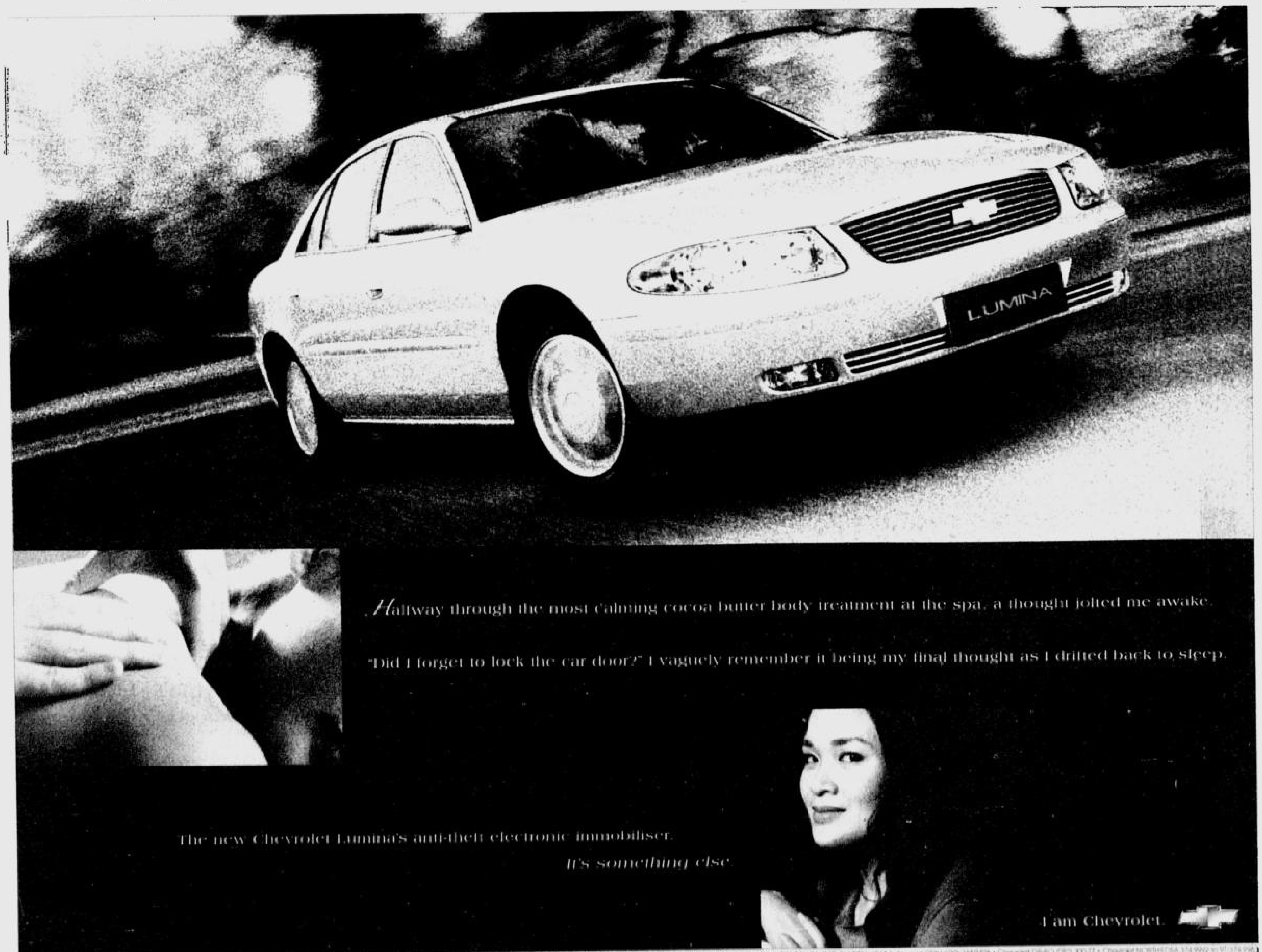
With a lower debt burden, the Ayala Group is also primed to spend roughly P35 billion in capital expenditures this year, the bulk of which will go to Globe Telecom Inc. and property arm Ayala Land Inc.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez


LUMINA
Halfway through the most calming cocoa butter body treatment at the spa, a thought jolted me awake.
"Did I forget to lock the car door?" I vaguely remember it being my final thought as I drifted back to sleep.
The new Chevrolet Lumina's anti-theft electronic immobiliser.
It's something else.
I am Chevrolet.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Toilet tumor

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

IT'S time again for an advice column for investors in the stock market: Be careful!

Just in case you were in a coma like our lawmakers, who recently treated us to a two-notch downgrade in our credit rating by dragging their feet on tax measures, let me inform you that the stock market is perking up again.

Well, only after seven years!

Anyway, as they say in the market, any boom in stock trading can only happen if the public starts putting money in stocks. Meaning, the gullible kind!

The problem is, in this up-and-down casino-like market that we have, you have to kill for information to help you in your trading decision.

Unfortunately, information on the listed companies is not that easy to come by, not even from the SEC or the Philippine Stock Exchange.

Only the "well-connected" can get the, well, "right" information.

* * *

ONE case in point is Saniwares, the nickname of Sanitary Wares Manufacturing Corp., a 72-percent subsidiary of the US multinational American Standard, the world famous maker of … well, toilets.

Three months ago, Saniwares declared insolvency. It said it could not pay off its debts anymore. The value of its assets, according to its letter to stockholders, was less than the amount of its debts—both with banks and suppliers.

Saniwares happened to be, at one time or another, a publicly listed company.

In fact, the Government Service Insurance System, or our beloved GSIS, got so in love with the company, it bought more than 10 percent of Saniwares.

And the GSIS did not even bother to check on its investments in Saniwares. It did not have a board seat.

GSIS just assigned its voting rights and all, well, to some ex-pat executives from the US parent firm American Standard. One of them stayed in a first-class hotel! Not a house. Not a condo. A FIRST-CLASS hotel!

I don't know, but the last time I checked, the money of the GSIS was still our money. I mean, you just don't flash it down the investment toilet just like that!

* * *

NOT surprisingly, however, Saniwares had two stockbrokers for directors.

One was Wilson Sy, former chair of PSE, who also owns a stock brokerage company called Wealth Securities.

The other was Gregorio Yu, former president of Tagaytay Highlands, who also owns the brokerage firm Solar.

They owned less than 10 percent each of Saniwares.

Why those two stockbrokers had board seats in a listed company like Saniwares, with less than 10 percent, while GSIS had none with its more than 10 percent, is still one of the unexplained mysteries of the universe.

No wonder, the GSIS never figured out what hit it, when Saniwares declared insolvency.

For that matter, neither did the public who bought stocks in the company. Nobody warned the public that Saniwares was in a deep s..t!

No word of warning ever came from the SEC or from the PSE, despite those two stockbrokers sitting in the Saniwares board.

I mean, everybody kept quiet about the financial tumor of the toilet maker. It never showed in the financial statements. Who were its auditors, anyway?

* * *

BUT here is the biggest surprise of it all. American Standard is only closing down its manufacturing plant here. It is actually staying on as a marketing and sales outfit.

In other words, it will import everything it sells here. What else is new?

Nobody has anything against the closure of a manufacturing business here to switch to trading. It is a business decision.

But the closure of Saniwares raised some eyebrows, because reportedly it would only pay off "secured" creditors. Small suppliers would be left out in the cold.

One of them is Ermita Gas, a small fuel dealer of Petron, which filed criminal cases against the top officers of Saniwares.

From what I gathered, Saniwares tapped Ermita Gas as supplier, for the first time, only several days before its closure.

As a result, after delivering some P6 million worth of fuel to Saniwares, Ermita Gas could not get payment of even a single cross-eyed centavo.

* * *

BUT the thing is, as Ermita Gas claimed in its case against the Saniwares executives, no company could close down its manufacturing plant overnight.

It had to be a long, tedious process of decision making, not to mention the careful planning and such. You somehow prepare for it. Gosh, you even plan for a party. What more the closure of a business?

That the executives knew for some time the company was going to close down, is a reasonable claim by Ermita Gas.

For indeed, Saniwares ordered the P6 million worth of fuel from Ermita Gas last October, only a month before it closed down the plant.

What's more, Ermita Gas claimed that Saniwares forced it to make the final delivery in advance. Ermita Gas was scheduled to make the delivery on Nov. 27 last year. Saniwares forced it to deliver the goods on Nov. 25.

Whaddayano—that was just a day before the closure. You mean, Saniwares made the decision to close down only a few minutes after the delivery?

* * *

ERMITA Gas thinks that, because the US firm American Standard is re-opening a business here, the closure of the manufacturing plant was meant to deceive the creditors, particularly small helpless powerless suppliers like Ermita Gas.

On the same day Saniwares declared insolvency, its parent company American Standard issued a circular to the same dealers of Saniwares that it would open a new marketing and sales business.

In fact, American Standard already made reservation with the SEC on the name American Standard Philippines.

It even declared to the SEC that the supposedly "new" company was actually already an ongoing concern. Could it have been referring to Saniwares?

Look—the old and the new companies only happen to have the same controlling stockholders.

Mark McCrae, an executive of Saniwares, who was one of only two officers authorized to transact business for the closed company, is also the one who announced the launching of the new trading business.

* * *

NOW here's the clincher. Ermita Gas said it had information that Saniwares removed its inventory from the plant in Las Piñas, meaning, away from the reach of creditors, particularly the small suppliers.

Ermita Gas said that Saniwares moved the goods to a warehouse in Sta. Ana, Manila, through its longtime trucker called Meister Transport.

It said that the same company probably intended to sell them under the new trading company.

And so Saniwares can only pay off P700 million of its debts, mainly to secured creditors. It claimed it has no money for the others.

Yet Saniwares was able to give one of its executives a handsome separation package. It is only P5 million.

What kind of a listed company citizen is that?

And how is American Standard going to face its customers from now on under a new name? Maybe it does not care about its reputation anymore.

ING Investment expects robust stock market this year

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

ING Investment Management, a leading retail fund manager in the country, said it remained bullish on the local stock market, which is being backed by expected double-digit growth in corporate earnings, despite the recent downgrade by Moody's Investors Service of the Philippines' sovereign debt rating.

Paul Joseph Garcia, chief investment officer of ING Investment Management Philippines, said the ING Group was overweight on the Philippines, which means that in terms of the investments it manages, it will allocate more money to the Philippines.

In fact Garcia said they expected the yearend Philippine composite stock index at 2,200, a 20-percent growth from the 1,822 level at the end of 2004. At best, the index may even hit 2,600, he said.

The index has yet to regain its all-time high of 3,300 in 1997.

ING Investment Management is the trust department of ING Bank N.V. Manila and manages close to P20 billion in fund assets. About P1.5 billion of this is invested in equities.

Garcia also said that corporate earnings were expected to grow by 20 percent this year, although slower than the 30- to 35-percent expansion in corporate earnings last year.

What will drive earnings this year are lower interest expenses and companies' efforts to clean up their dollar debt, which will be helped by a stronger peso, he said.

Earnings growth, however, will get hit by an expected slowdown in exports and agriculture and new taxes to be imposed, Garcia pointed out.

He added that the sectors that were likely to attract investors this year included property, with office vacancy rates dipping to single-digit levels recently, and banking, whose foreclosed pieces of property are also likely to be reduced with the renewed interest in the real estate segment.

ING Investment Management is the top retail fund manager in the Asia-Pacific Region as reported by Asia Asset Management Magazine last September.

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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
METRO MANILA

IN THE MATTER OF:

SM INVESTMENTS CORPORATION — Registration of Securities
Registrant

x--x

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that on February 1, 2005, a sworn statement was filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission for and on behalf of SM Investments Corporation (SMIC) for the registration of 500,000,000 to 565,000,000 common shares with a par value of P10.00 per share. Of these, a minimum of 75,000,000 and a maximum of 140,000,000 shares (consisting of primary shares and secondary shares of up to 25%) of the resulting common shares of stock of SMIC shall be offered to the public at the minimum offer price of P230.00 and a maximum offer price of P300.00 per share.

According to the papers presented, the following persons are the officers/directors of the corporation:

Board of Directors

Henry Sy, Sr.	Chairman
Teresita T. Sy	Vice Chairman
Henry Sy, Jr.	Vice Chairman
Harley T. Sy	President
Hans T. Sy	First Executive Vice President
Jose T. Sio	Second Executive Vice President and CFO
Gregory L. Domingo	Independent Director

Executive Officers

Herbert T. Sy	First Executive Vice President
Elizabeth T. Sy	Treasurer
Atty. Corazon I. Morando	Senior Vice President, Legal and Corporate Affairs
Atty. Emmanuel C. Paras	Corporate Secretary
Atty. Epitacio Borcelis Jr.	Assistant Corporate Secretary
Atty. Arthur A. Sy	Assistant Vice President, Legal and Corporate Affairs

The Registration Statement, as well as the papers attached thereto are available for inspection during business hours at the Securities and Exchange Commission, EDSA, Quezon City. Copies of the Registration Statement will be furnished to interested parties at such reasonable charge as the Commission may prescribe.

February 11, 2005

Justina Callangan
Director
Securities and Exchange Commission

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[1] Resulting number of shares after reclassification. As of the date of this Notice, the SEC has not yet approved the application for the said reclassification.

Shares end lower …

From page B1

Follow-through buying in early trade pushed the key index above 2,100 points but investors then chose to start locking in recent gains.

Turnover was 6.01 billion shares worth P1.86 billion. Losers led gainers 76 to 48, with 45 stocks unchanged.

After enjoying a strong run-up in past sessions, Metro Pacific and Benpres declined on profit-taking. Metro Pacific shed 3.1 percent to 63 centavos, while Benpres fell 5.7 percent to P1.32. There is talk in the market that Metro Pacific is bidding for Benpres' stake in the North Luzon expressway project.

"The index has been up 15 percent so far for the year, so some people may have decided it's time to cash in on gains and wait for another opportunity to re-enter the market and assess the upcoming listings, which are enjoying good market buzz following the successful offering of Semirara," said Citiseconline.com investment analyst Mark Alan Canizares.

Semirara, which lost 2.2 percent to P44.50, held a successful secondary stock offering last month.

Canizares said investors may be liquidating some of their holdings to invest in upcoming initial public offerings. *AP, AFP*

Ayala eyes listing …

From page B1

been set.

IMI is acquiring the electronic assets in Tustin (California), Singapore and Cebu of Saturn Electronics and Engineering Co., a US-based electronics firm. This is expected to add 10 percent to IMI's present manufacturing capacity.

The asset purchase agreement was signed last Jan. 29. Among the assets were inventory, accounts receivable, contracts, fixed assets and intellectual property. IMI has offered employment to selected personnel in Tustin, Singapore and Cebu. Saturn is based in Michigan.

Ayala Corp. owns 78.8 percent of IMI. Another local chemical firm called Resins Inc. holds roughly 19.7 percent.

IMI is mainly into electronics services in the Philippines with its manufacturing facility in Laguna. Bulk of its revenues are in the production of hard disks and optical disks.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of February 18, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	30	30	28.5	29	1,745,600
Bank of the Phil. Islands	59	59	57.5	57.5	343,200
China Banking Corp.	600	630	600	630	10,100
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	49.5	49.5	49	49	24,100
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	1	1.04	0.9	0.93	67,660,000
International Exch. Bank	19.5	20	19.25	19.25	519,700
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	40	40.5	39.5	39.5	2,881,100
Philippine National Bank	35.5	35.5	34	34	62,700
Philippine Trust Co.	39	39	39	39	900
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	15	15.25	15	15.25	3,000
Security Bank Corp.	33	33.5	33	33.5	378,500
Union Bank of the Phil.	31	31	30.5	30.5	13,300
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.04	1.04	60,000
First Abacus Financial	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	100,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	2,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	270	280	270	280	380
Manulife Financial Corp.	2510	2510	2510	2510	100
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	2.12	2.12	2.12	2.12	101,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	140	140	140	140	500
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1785	1785	1785	1785	260
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	17.75	17.75	17.75	17.75	154,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.68	1.68	1.56	1.58	9,954,000
Easycall Phils. Inc.-Com	1	1	1	1	10,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	930	930	930	930	26,600
Ipeople Inc.	4.8	5	4.7	4.7	165,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	800,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.041	0.042	0.038	0.04	14,300,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.7	3.7	3.55	3.6	3,897,000
Transpacific Broadcast	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	30,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1405	1410	1400	1405	38,520
Ivantage Corp.	0.76	0.86	0.76	0.82	68,320,000
Philweb Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.012	9,500,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	17.5	17.5	17.25	17.25	234,800
Manila Electric Co. B	27.5	27.5	26	26.5	1,121,000
Petron Corp.	3.8	3.95	3.8	3.95	14,549,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.6	1.64	1.6	1.6	1,111,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.96	2	1.96	2	1,038,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7.9	7.9	7.8	7.9	2,405,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.48	0.5	0.48	0.5	280,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	11,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.57	0.58	0.55	0.55	1,720,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.04	230,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.45	4.45	3.9	4.05	17,423,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	3,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.95	4.2	3.95	4	304,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	37.5	38	37.5	38	115,100
Jollibee Foods Corp.	28.5	28.5	28	28.5	1,225,800
Pancake House Inc.	1.2	1.56	1.2	1.56	285,000
RFM Corp.	1.24	1.24	0.88	0.96	118,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.39	0.48	0.39	0.42	2,030,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	58	57.5	57.5	39,900
San Miguel Corp. B	80.5	81	80.5	81	89,400
Universal Robina Corp.	9.9	9.9	9.9	9.9	10,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.32	0.33	0.3	0.3	660,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.013	0.013	0.01	0.011	466,600,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.014	0.014	0.011	0.011	22,300,000
Ayala Corp.	8.6	8.7	8.3	8.4	7,752,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.72	0.73	0.69	0.69	1,070,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.8	5	4.65	4.65	1,291,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11.5	11.5	11.25	11.25	6,300
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.036	0.038	0.034	0.036	62,500,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.28	2.28	2.2	2.2	398,000
APC Group Inc.	0.63	0.65	0.5	0.51	57,730,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	168,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	680,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.72	1.8	1.7	1.8	30,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	10,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	20,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	19.75	19.75	19.75	19.75	44,500
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.18	0.18	2,250,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.44	1.48	1.3	1.32	86,133,000
A Brown Co. Inc.	0.88	0.88	0.86	0.86	230,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.22	0.23	0.22	0.225	1,420,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.27	0.27	3,450,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.67	0.69	0.64	0.64	7,450,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	4.55	4.55	3.9	4.1	7,343,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.0725	0.0725	0.0625	0.065	46,300,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.54	1.54	1.48	1.48	656,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	9	9.4	9	9.3	1,435,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	50	50	49.5	49.5	1,093,500
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.25	0.35	0.25	0.27	1,340,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.13	0.135	0.105	0.11	83,520,000
House Of Investments Inc.	1.9	1.9	1.84	1.86	1,995,000
Ionics Inc.	1.82	1.82	1.82	1.82	1,043,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	530,000
Macroasia Corp.	2.24	2.26	2.22	2.22	305,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	500,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.018	0.02	0.018	0.02	2,900,000
Medco Holdings	0.42	0.5	0.42	0.42	640,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.7	1.7	9,191,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.155	0.155	280,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.35	0.45	0.35	0.37	1,450,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.68	0.71	0.63	0.63	242,390,000
Polar Property Holdings	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.3	18,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.46	0.48	0.38	0.41	25,570,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.24	1.32	1.24	1.32	86,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.45	0.47	0.4	0.4	3,070,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1.08	1.08	1.06	1.06	442,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.59	0.67	0.59	0.63	3,520,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.5	0.56	0.5	0.5	370,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	10,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	2.95	3	2.95	3	40,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.165	0.165	0.16	0.16	1,000,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.24	0.26	0.225	0.235	5,160,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.4	0.41	0.38	0.38	4,910,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Active Alliance Inc.	1	1.1	1	1.1	390,000
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.59	0.59	0.5	0.5	110,000
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2	1,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	100,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.93	0.96	0.93	0.96	110,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.11	0.145	0.11	0.11	24,800,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	10,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.82	1.86	1.52	1.66	45,950,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	1.38	1.44	1.28	1.28	11,552,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.95	0.98	0.9	0.92	8,480,000
Manila Jockey Club	5	5.3	4.9	4.9	65,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.4	0.42	0.39	0.39	4,350,000
Philippine Racing Club	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	1,000,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	17.25	17.5	17	17.25	1,065,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	2,300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	2,500
OTHERS					
Far Eastern University	460	460	460	460	160
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	9.4	9.5	9.4	9.4	9,583,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.42	0.42	30,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.93	0.93	0.92	0.93	650,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.39	0.4	0.36	0.36	11,340,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.36	0.39	0.29	0.32	134,560,000
Elb Realty Developers Inc.	0.38	0.39	0.34	0.34	1,890,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.58	0.58	0.53	0.54	28,260,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.3	1.32	1.3	1.3	47,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.72	1.72	6,547,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.21	0.21	500,000
Gotesco Land Inc. B	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	100,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.75	2.75	2.75	2.75	1,000,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.3	0.3	0.28	0.28	5,990,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	290,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.25	0.26	0.22	0.22	7,000,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.215	0.23	0.2	0.225	3,920,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.85	2.95	2.85	2.95	70,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.31	0.32	0.3	0.3	5,550,000
SM Development Corp.	1.9	2	1.86	2	1,044,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.3	8.5	8.3	8.5	8,682,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	1.2	1.3	1.2	1.3	275,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	1.32	1.4	1.32	1.4	170,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	186,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	7.4	7.6	7.3	7.3	776,000
Benguet Corp. A	9	9	9	9	19,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.2	16,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.4	0.41	0.4	0.41	33,860,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.44	0.45	0.43	0.44	71,860,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.022	0.022	0.021	0.021	166,800,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.03	0.03	0.029	0.029	576,800,000
Omico Corp.	0.0085	0.009	0.008	0.0085	2,533,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.14	1.26	1.12	1.22	7,625,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.38	1.54	1.38	1.48	33,106,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	45.5	45.5	44	44.5	740,300
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.33	0.34	0.29	0.34	480,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	15,200,000
Interport Res.	0.007	0.007	0.006	0.006	75,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.007	0.0075	0.007	0.0075	74,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	186,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	2,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	550,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.46	0.46	0.45	0.45	120,000
Pacifica	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	11,900,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	55,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.25	0.26	0.195	0.2	154,640,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	50,000

DISCLOSURES

AYALA Corp. moved its annual stockholders' meeting from April 8 to 7, 2:30 p.m. at the Grand Ballroom of Hotel Intercontinental Manila, Makati City.

* * *

ELECTED officers of **Central Azucarera de Tarlac** were Pedro Cojuangco, president and chair; Josephine Reyes, vice president and treasurer; Jose Cojuangco Jr., VP; Ernesto Teopaco, VP; Nereo Mendoza, assistant vice president and assistant treasurer; Emmanuel Cochico, AVP; Arcadio Lopez, secretary and Fernando Cojuangco, assistant secretary.

* * *

OMICO Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 29, 9 a.m. at the Dasmariñas/Magallanes/San Lorenzo Function Rooms of Makati Sports Club. Stockholders of record as of March 23 will be entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

ACESITE (Philippines) Hotel Corp. denied having information to explain the 40-percent drop of its share price that fell to P7.80 from P13 each.

Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BPI taps OFW remittances for microfinance program

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE AYALAS' Bank of the Philippine Islands yesterday launched a pioneering lending window that seeks to channel remittances from overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) to microfinancing.

In a press briefing, BPI president Aurelio Montinola III said the project, called "Tulong sa Pinoy Dollar Account," aims to rally overseas Filipinos to a savings mobilization program wherein they are encouraged to open a BPI dollar time deposit of at least $1,000.

The OFWs' dollar savings will be matched by the bank with peso-denominated lending to small enterprises. But instead of lending directly, the bank will accredit about 10 microfinancing institutions to administer the lending.

"We all know about the eight million Filipinos abroad and the $8.5 billion (in annual remittances) they send," Montinola said.

"The $1,000 (deposit) looks small, but if you add them up, it will have a big impact," he said.

He also noted that the new lending program would likely be a good business, given the low delinquency rate of only 3-5 percent on microfinancing in the Philippines.

BPI signed yesterday a memorandum of understanding with the National Federation of Filipino-American Associations (NaFFAA) led by New York-based Filipina executive Loida Nicolas-Lewis.

BSP GOVERNOR Rafael Buenaventura, National Federation of Filipino-American Associations chair Loida Nicolas-Lewis and Bank of the Philippine Islands president and CEO Aurelio Montinola III shake hands after the signing of the memorandum of understanding held at the BPI head office in Ayala, Makati. JOHNNY VILLENA

Montinola said at present, more than 80 percent of OFW remittances coursed through BPI was directly going to consumption spending. He said a larger portion of these funds would be of better use if Filipino workers and their families were given a more permanent and stable source of livelihood.

The bank's dollar-mobilization campaign will use NaFFAA's 12 regional chapters in the United States and BPI's more than 700 branches in the Philippines.

Lewis said overseas Filipinos, whom she calls "Global Pinoys," were keen on helping the country through investments but it would be too tedious for them to keep watch of these while staying abroad.

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura lauded BPI's initiative, saying the poor deserved cheaper access to credit rather than the traditional "five-six" street lending—wherein every P5 one borrows on a Monday, P6 has to be paid by Friday.

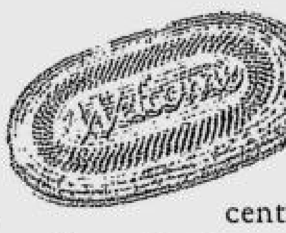
"The poor pay better than the middle class and definitely much better than the rich," he said.

For this project, BPI Foundation will reintroduce its Financing Assistance Line, an award-winning project began in 1989, which until 2002 had lent about P60 million to various non-profit organizations. This project benefited more than 2,000 small borrowers whose loan amounts ranged from P5,000 to P200,000, with an encouraging repayment rate of 95 percent.

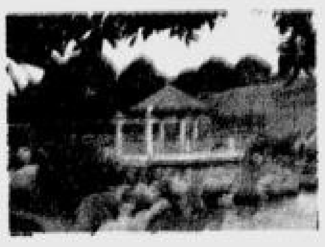
NOW MORE ACCESSIBLE VIA THE GREENFIELD / MALITLIT EXIT

"When everything important to us is within reach, we know we've made the right decision."

Dr. Benjie Luna and daughter Ysobel
Ayala Westgrove Heights Homeowners

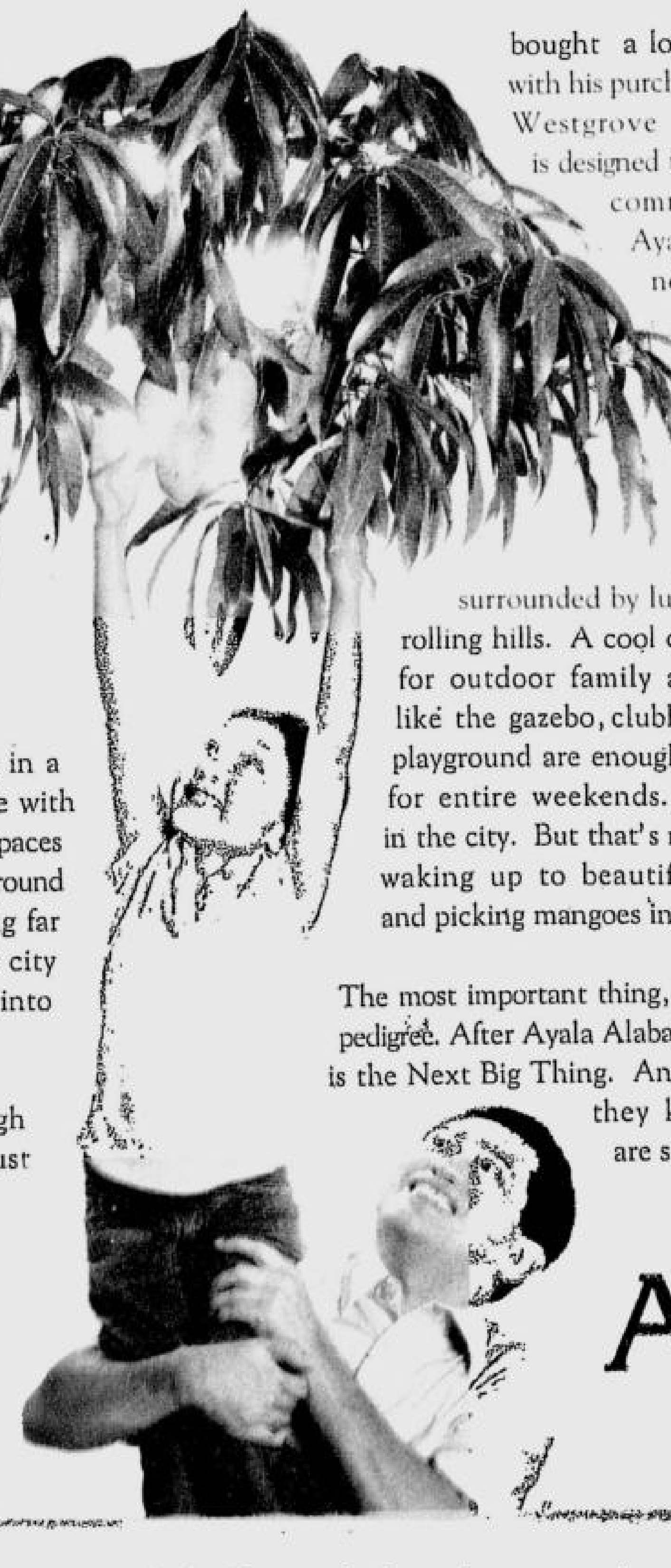


Growing up in the city, you simply get used to having everything within teach – schools, hospitals, shopping centers and public utilities. Everything is convenient and comfortable for you. That's why Benjie, a cardiologist, and his wife, Ginny, a flight attendant, initially had doubts about leaving their first home. But at the end of 2003, they decided to escape the squeeze that has intensified in their 3-bedroom condominium in Pasig City. More importantly, factories in the area have greatly contributed to the worsening air pollution. "We were really thinking of our daughters," Ginny said. "We want them to grow up in a cleaner, safer community."



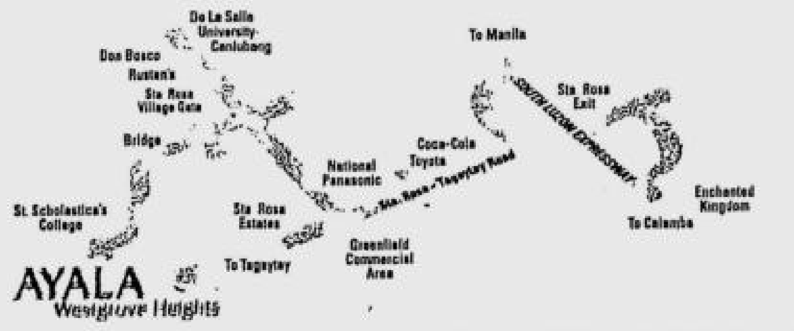
They've always dreamed of living in a more natural environment. A place with plenty of trees, hills and wide open spaces where their children can freely roam around to play. But the thought of moving far from the familiar comforts of the city seemed impractical. Like many families, they have fallen into the "big city trap".

Then Benjie discovered Ayala Westgrove Heights through his daughter Ysobel's prep school principal. "He had just bought a lot and was so happy with his purchase," he said. Ayala Westgrove Heights, after all, is designed to be a self-contained community, similar to Ayala Alabang. All the necessary amenities are continuously being built around it: schools, hospitals, commercial centers, groceries, churches. Only 15 minutes away from Alabang, it is a sanctuary that does not isolate, but offers a chance to escape at the end of the day.



Inside, they are surrounded by lush mango groves and rolling hills. A cool climate is also perfect for outdoor family activities. Amenities like the gazebo, clubhouse and children's playground are enough to keep them home for entire weekends. "My daughters used to miss our old place in the city. But that's not the case now. They love everything here... waking up to beautiful views, playing with birds and crickets, and picking mangoes in our backyard," Ginny said.

The most important thing, of course, is the fact that it has the Ayala Land pedigree. After Ayala Alabang, Benjie knows that Ayala Westgrove Heights is the Next Big Thing. And as they begin to grow their family roots here, they know that the fruits of a wonderful future are simply within reach.



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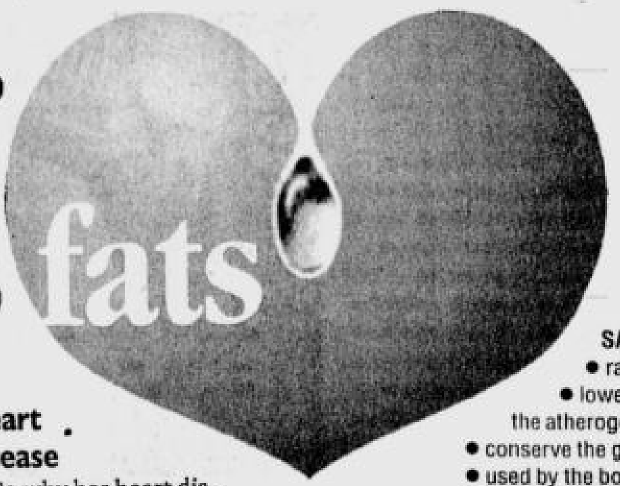
Heart of the matter on saturated, trans fats



By Cesar C. Villariba Jr.
Contributor

IT TOOK a decade-long battle between food processors and health advocates to finally lay down the truth that hydrogenated unsaturated oils—not saturated fats—are the artery-clogging trans fats hidden in fast-food fries, crunchy cookies and crispy crackers.

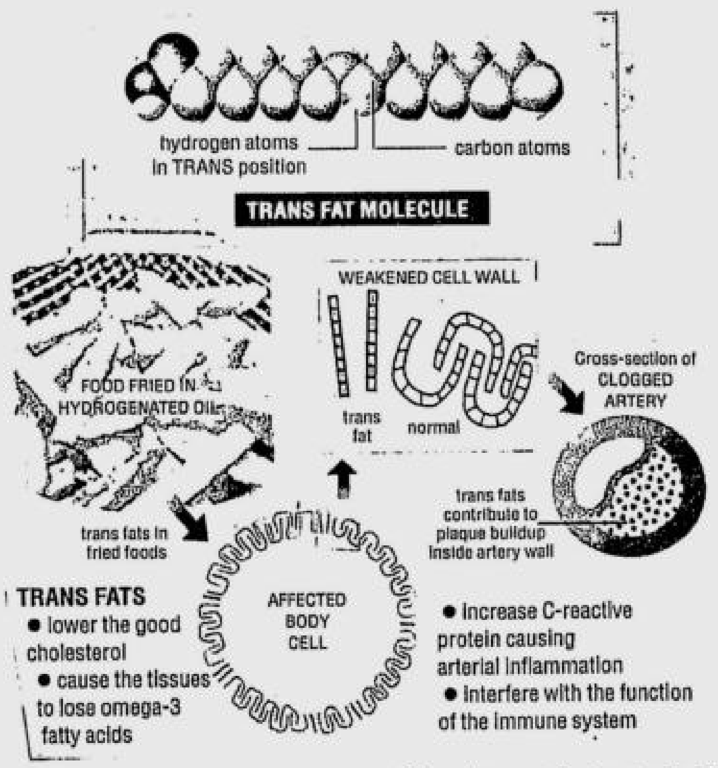
Scientists—biochemist Dr. Mary Enig (since 1986), Dutch researchers Mensink and Katan in 1990, epidemiologist Walter Willett at Harvard (1993 and 1999)—have long confirmed the positive relationship of trans fatty acids produced by hydrogenated oils to coronary heart disease as well as breast, colon and prostate cancer.

Denmark responded by coming up with an executive order on March 2003 that effectively banned hydrogenated oils from the Danish market if they contained more than two percent trans fat.

Required in food labels

After 40 years in the food system on such a large scale, the US Food and Drug Administration finally required packaged foods to state in their labels by January 2006 how much trans fatty acids they contain.

Last Jan. 12, the US Department of Agriculture and Department of Health and Human Services issued the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005 recommending that consumers "keep trans fatty acid consumption as low as possible."


hydrogen atoms in TRANS position
carbon atoms
TRANS FAT MOLECULE
FOOD FRIED IN HYDROGENATED OIL
trans fats in fried foods
WEAKENED CELL WALL
trans fat
normal
Cross-section of CLOGGED ARTERY
trans fats contribute to plaque buildup inside artery wall
AFFECTED BODY CELL
TRANS FATS
• lower the good cholesterol
• cause the tissues to lose omega-3 fatty acids
• increase C-reactive protein causing arterial inflammation
• interfere with the function of the immune system

Vindication

A generation ago, when cardiologists waved off Americans and Filipinos alike from saturated fats like butter and coconut oil, partially hydrogenated oils in the form of shortening and margarine became a preferred alternative.

Now, in an about-face, researchers have determined that trans fat "can grease the way to a heart attack faster than a cup of lard."

The turn of events makes Filipino coconut oil advocate Dr. Conrado Dayrit feel vindicated.

For two decades Filipinos have kept (or hidden) coconut oil away from their traditional diet, saturated as there were information that it was bad for the heart.

Now, Dayrit is clearly saying: "If you want to avoid heart disease, take coconut oil."

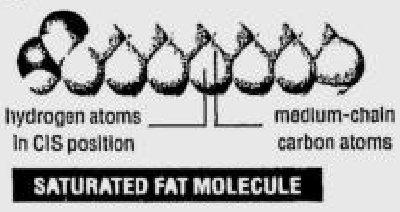
He points out that not only the much-maligned coconut oil does not cause atherosclerosis, but also it is actually beneficial in the prevention and treatment of heart disease.

Naturally stable

Coconut oil, precisely because it is saturated, is naturally stable and does not oxidate and turn rancid easily, Dayrit says.

Its shorter molecules in medium chain formation make it easily digested, not stored, by the body and absorbed into minute cells where they function best, supporting the immune system in fighting germs including viruses that cause atherosclerosis.

Because coconut oil does not need to be chemically altered to make it stable, it does not create the problem of trans fatty acids that are toxic.



SATURATED FATS
- raise the good cholesterol
- lower the blood levels of the atherogenic lipoprotein
- conserve the good omega-3 fatty acids
- used by the body to fight viruses, bacteria, and protozoa; support the immune system

Heart disease

So why has heart disease remained the No. 1 cause of death among Filipinos?

In the mortality list of the Department of Health, although coronary disease tops the list followed by diseases of the vascular system, Filipinos who die from heart attack comprise only about 16 percent, or one-eighth of all deaths.

Dayrit believes the heart disease rate may have been overstated in death certificates. He relies more on hospital records spanning more than 30 years to show that there has been no significant change in the number of heart diseases among Filipinos parallel to fat consumption.

Despite inroads made by unsaturated vegetable oils, a great majority of Filipinos still consume saturated coconut oil, which an intimidated industry hid behind the label "vegetable oil."

Saturated fats blamed

Dayrit recalls that in 1950, just as polyunsaturated oils were replacing saturated fats in the American diet, heart disease was found to cause half of deaths in the United States. Since then and up to the end of the century, Americans have blamed the rise in heart mortality rate on saturated fats and cholesterol.

But Dayrit says that if saturated fat causes heart disease, "then coconut consuming Filipinos, Sri Lankans and Polynesians should be dying of heart disease right and left. But they are not. In fact, they have the lowest prevalence of coronary disease."

In a study among 12 countries to determine the relationship between heart disease mortality and fat calories consumed, the Philippines, the only coconut oil consumer, had the lowest mortality rate.

Bicolanos

Dayrit also asks why Bicolanos, who consume the most saturated coconut oil from where they get 62.4 percent of their fat calories, were found to have the lowest heart and brain death rates among five regional groups in Luzon in a 1984 diet-heart study.

He says that there has never been a study that demonstrated that high blood cholesterol causes heart disease.

In fact, he says, the opposite is true. Numerous studies have proven that blood cholesterol does not cause clogged arteries. Long-term studies have concluded that those with low cholesterol levels were just as likely to have blocked arteries as those with high cholesterol levels.

Vegetable oils

The antisaturated fat campaign perpetuated by the powerful American vegetable oil lobby prompted their substitution of tropical saturated oils, preferred by the food industry for their many desirable properties.

To make the cheaper unsaturated alternative artificially stable, highly refined vegetable oils are partially hydrogenated to become solid at room temperatures to increase the product's shelf life. In the process, unnatural, harmful fatty acids called trans fats are created.

VIRGIN COCONUT OIL

These trans fatty acids are abnormal because they cannot link together, or to other fatty acids in the proper manner thus weakening the cell wall and destroying normal cellular function. When entire tissues and organs become seriously affected, disease results.

While uncovering the lies about trans fats, these studies also concede that it is virtually impossible to remove trans fats altogether in a country which cultivated it.

But the irony of it all is that the Philippines has what America tried to drive out in the first place: the healthiest dietary oil in abundance.

What the local food industry now needs is an oil change that will bring the crisp and crunch back to their cookies and crackers guiltlessly, healthfully.

Trans fats: phantom killers

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

MEDICAL FILES

WHAT do a quarter pounder, french fries, breaded fish sticks, roastbeef sandwich, most donuts and ice cream have in common? When you eat them regularly, your arteries will likely clog much sooner than people who shun them. They pose a threat on the heart and blood vessels.

It's not so much the saturated fats that they contain. A more dangerous type of fat lurks within every gram of the said food items, and many others that we commonly eat, including cakes, biscuits, pies and margarine.

Beware of trans fats. This phantom fat teems in food made with partially hydrogenated oils or shortening. We enjoy the good taste of some food items because of the trans fats. It makes pie crusts flakier and french fries crispier.

It's a phantom because food labels do not indicate the amount of trans fats the food contains. Thus, it's "invisible" fat. Only your arteries get to feel them, and, when it's usually already too late, you yourself feel them.

Fast-food chain

Recently, a giant fast-food multinational chain had to pay a huge amount of money for using trans fats in its food items. It pledged to spend several million dollars more to educate the public on the health hazards posed by trans fats and how to avoid them.

A noble commitment, but it could be a little too late. Countless people must already be suffering from complications due to clogging of their arteries, and countless others could have been doomed to a lifelong intake of medicines for fast-food and trans fat-related diseases like diabetes, high blood pressure and cholesterol problems.

"It's a secret killer," says Walter Willett, head of the nutrition department at the Harvard School of Public Health. "With saturated fat, at least food labels tell you how much you're eating. With trans, it's anybody's guess."

The local Bureau of Food and Drugs should require fast-food chains and manufacturers of biscuits, cookies, cakes and ice cream to indicate on the labels a fair estimate of how much trans and saturated fats they contain.

Consumers can at least make a more intelligent decision whether or not to regularly eat these food items. If they disregard the warning on how much artery-clogging fat the food has, then it's their own lookout. If you eat trans fat-laden food items daily, you're not much better off than a smoker.

And BFAD and other food agencies should set limits not only on saturated fats but also on trans fats.

No cholesterol

Trans fat is created when oils are partially hydrogenated. Hydrogenation makes oils more stable and turns liquid oil into stick margarine. So read the labels of your favorite food items and avoid the thousands of foods with "partially hydrogenated oil."

Watch out too for tricky claims of "no cholesterol" or "low cholesterol" in food items. They may refer to the saturated fat contents. A low saturated fat, but high trans fat content may make the food item just as much a health risk as those high in saturated fats.

Since the early 1990's, this was an issue for McDonald's when it claimed that its french fries were cooked in cholesterol-free, 100-percent vegetable oil. They stopped the practice of frying their potatoes, fish and chicken in beef tallow. Consumer advocacy groups, however, said the switch was not to pure vegetable oil, but to partially hydrogenated vegetable shortening.

But aren't vegetable oils healthy? Yes, vegetable oils are rich in polyunsaturated fats that help prevent heart attacks, but they turn rancid quickly when they are removed from vegetables. The unstable polyunsaturated fats are therefore converted by food manufacturers to the very stable partially hydrogenated fat. Fast-food chains buy them and use them.

Officially, fast-food giants use little lard, butter or oils containing primarily saturated fats but in their place, they use partially hydrogenated vegetable oils. It makes french fries crispy, but it also makes a middle-aged fast-food fan a prime candidate for heart attacks and certain types of cancers.

Even fish can become an artery's nightmare when fried in oil rich in trans fats.

So the next time you buy fast food, and other deep-fried food, think of the phantom that could kill you slowly with every bite you take.

Ateneo Grade School Math Olympiad

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

LAST Feb. 11, more than 70 Ateneo and Mathematics Trainers Guild (MTG) grade school students competed with and against each other in the 3rd Ateneo Grade School Math Olympiad (AMO). These students have undergone extensive training in the past school year and the AMO became a showcase for displaying their skills, attitudes, and knowledge in problem solving.

The individual written round consisted of three challenging problems to be solved within three hours. Sample problems for Grades 5 and 6 were:

- Four numbers are written in a row. The average of the first two numbers is 7; the average of the middle two numbers is 2.3; and the average of the last two numbers is 8.4. What is the average of the first number and the last number?
- The number of elves in Britain

  Is six digits long, I maintain.
  It's a cube. It's a square.
  If six elves went elsewhere,
  A prime number of them would remain.

  How many elves are there in Britain?

Grade 7 problems

The Grade 7 students faced problems such as:

- What is the largest attainable remainder when a 3-digit number is divided by the sum of its digits?
- For any positive integer n, let s(n) denote the number of ordered pairs (x.y) of positive integers for which $1/x + 1/y = 1/n$. For example, the equation $1/x + 1/y = 1/7$ has 3 ordered pairs (8, 56), (14, 14) and (56, 8) as solutions and hence, $s(7) = 3$. Find all positive integers n for which $s(n) = 3$.

Gold medallists were: Carmela Antoinette Lao (St. Jude Catholic School), Kevin Christopher Catbagan (Ateneo), and Carlo Francisco Adajar (PAREF Southridge School for Boys). Silver medallists were: Aldric Cristoval Reyes (Chiang Kai Shek College), Patrick Adrian Ong (St. Jude), and Angeline Baniqued (St. Paul's College, Pasig). Bronze medallists were: Darwin Ivan Carrasco (Pamplona Elementary School), Kerish Villegas (La Salle Greenhills) and Mikhael Fiorello Llado (Ateneo).

Group questions

In the group round, grace under time pressure was the essence as the students tried to answer questions in a few seconds or minutes. Sample questions:

- If you ask Batman's nemesis, Catwoman, how many cats she has, she answers with a riddle: "Five-sixths of my cats plus seven." How many cats does Catwoman have?
- Alexis draws 300 circles with diameter 1, Brianna draws 400 squares with side length 1, and Cyril draws 500 equilateral triangles with side length 1. If they all draw with the same type of pen, who uses the most ink?
- Lightning hit a tree one-fourth of the distance up the trunk from the ground and broke the tree so that its top landed 60 feet away to the left of its base. How tall was the tree originally?
- In the middle of the night, I heard the clock strike one time. The clock strikes the hours (for instance, it strikes five times at 5:00), and strikes one time on the half hour, so I did not know what time it was. What is the longest I had to stay awake before I knew what time it was?
- If the five-digit number 5DDDD is divisible by 6, then determine the digit D.
- Pat and Chris always walk up the subway escalator while it is running. Pat climbs 20 steps at a constant pace, taking 60 seconds to reach the top, whereas Chris only takes 16 steps at a constant pace, reaching the top in 72 seconds. Today the escalator broke and they walked up all the stairs at their usual paces. How many steps did they have to climb?

The following winners are all from the Ateneo, except for those indicated. First-place: Carlo Francisco Adajar (PAREF Southridge), Juan Miguel Ocampo, Rodolfo Eduardo Santiago. Second place: Jillian Krystel Sy (St. Stephen's High School), Anthony Aguilar, Dustin Kyle Syling, Angelo Luis Cortez. Third place: Jose Enrico Leceta (De La Salle Zobel School), Carlos Marcel Puyat, Kevin Mark Lumauig, Mikhael Fiorello Llado. Congratulations to all participants for doing very well.

New surgery for varicose veins

By Tessa R. Salazar

VARICOSE veins, once considered as just unsightly nuisance, are no longer a mere cosmetic problem.

"Varicose veins can kill. It's all in the books," said Dr. Rolly Mendiola, a US-based general laparoscopic and vascular surgeon who visited Manila recently to perform Transilluminated Powered Phlebectomy for the first time in the country. Mendiola pioneered the TIPP procedure for varicose veins in Wisconsin state.

Mendiola explained that surgical procedures on varicose veins in the United States used to be for cosmetic purposes. But experts discovered through ultrasound tests that varicose veins could actually lead to complications.

The "spider veins" found under the skin can become as thick as worms.

The traditional treatment for spider veins was a regimen of injections. But for varicose veins, injections may not work anymore.

Said Mendiola: "Varicose veins can cause ulcers. And when ulcers come up, they don't heal for years. This is what we call venous hypertension. There's too much pressure on the veins and they come out as ulcers."

Other problems

Bleeding could be another persistent problem, he said.

Thrombophlebitis, or inflammation of the vein, is another complication. The affected skin becomes tender and sore, and walking is adversely affected. The patient is often hospitalized and given antibiotics.

"The most dreaded [complications] are blood clots or deep venous thrombosis [DVT]. Thrombosis means blockage of the veins with blood clots. And that is dangerous," he said. "We have seen even teenagers, especially the obese, [dying] in emergency rooms. [During] autopsy, we find them full of blood clots and they have varicose veins."

Mendiola said airlines often advise passengers to avoid DVT by walking and exercising during long flights to help the circulation of blood, particularly in the lower extremities.

"When blood clots form in the legs, they can get to your lungs, and those are the ones that kill you," he said.

Old vs new

Mendiola, who has been based in Wisconsin for the past 25 years, introduced the TIIP at the Asian Hospital in Muntinlupa City last Feb. 15, with several surgeons witnessing the procedure.

"Transilluminated," he explained, means "light source." The instrument, connected to an electrical current, illuminates the problem areas.

"Phlebectomy" means the "removal" of the veins.

The old method, called "vein stripping," was the only method available before the introduction of TIPP. Vein stripping makes it hard for surgeons to pinpoint the problem areas because varicose veins are only visible when the patient stands up. As a result, many incisions are done—as many as 25 to 40—compared to only two to five in the TIPP method.

The previous method involved two-and-a-half to three hours of surgery. Now it's down to only 30 to 40 minutes, and patients go home after two hours, Mendiola explained.

"Once we put the light on, we see all the [problem] veins and remove them in two incisions," he said.

TIPP can be performed on patients of any body type and at any age. Mendiola, who has been doing TIPP for the last four years, said his oldest patient was 82.

Mendiola said he could not determine the actual cost of the procedure in the Philippines.

"I don't know how much the room, anesthesia and laboratory [tests] here cost. We do hope we can do it here for P60,000 to P75,000. It all depends after this first case. We want to make it affordable for people who need the surgery. We want to make it comparable to the cost of vein stripping that we used to do," he said.

How you get varicose veins

THE HUMAN heart pumps blood to all parts of the body. However, for the blood that circulates in the lower extremities to get back to the heart and the lungs more efficiently, the leg muscles squeeze the veins in the leg to help push the blood back up.

"If you sit down for long periods of time, there's a tendency for your legs to swell. This is because the blood is not brought back," explained Dr. Rolly Mendiola, a US-based general laparoscopic and vascular surgeon.

"If you go on a car or plane ride and take your shoes off for an extended period, [you'll notice that you can't put] your shoes back right away. That's because your feet swell a bit. You have to exercise that part so the muscles squeeze the veins to bring blood back up to the heart," he said.

Why don't our legs swell after a long night's sleep?

"When we sleep, our legs are at the level of our hearts, so [blood doesn't get retained in the legs] and they don't swell up," he said.

During prolonged inactivity, like when we sit down for work, the veins dilate and ruin the "one-way" system of the vein, that is, some of the blood also goes down, and stagnates. This stagnation leads to varicose veins.

More women are affected by varicose veins. Those likely to have them are those who sit on jobs for long periods or those standing as cashiers or sales clerks who don't move around that much.

Varicose veins may also be genetic.

During pregnancy, the enlarged uterus can put pressure on the iliac veins and blood stagnation takes place.

Obese people are prone to varicose veins.

To prevent varicose veins, Mendiola advised people to walk and exercise their lower extremities regularly. Obese persons must lose weight. Women prone to varicose veins should not wear 2.5- to 3-inch-high heels. *Tessa Salazar*

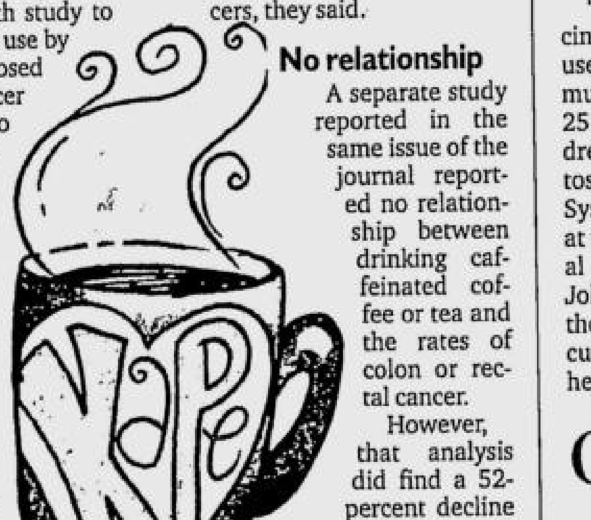
Drinking coffee may help protect vs liver cancer

WASHINGTON—That hot cup of coffee may do more than just provide a tasty energy boost. It also may help prevent the most common type of liver cancer.

A study of more than 90,000 Japanese found that people who drank coffee daily or nearly every day had half the risk of liver cancer as those who never drank coffee.

Causes of liver cancer include hepatitis, cirrhosis, excess alcohol consumption and diseases causing chronic inflammation of the liver.

Animal studies have suggested a protective association of coffee with liver cancer, so the research team led by Monami Inoue of the National Cancer Center in Tokyo analyzed a 10-year public health study to determine coffee use by people diagnosed with liver cancer and people who did not have cancer.



They found the likely occurrence of liver cancer in people who never or almost never drank coffee was 547.2 cases per 100,000 people over 10 years.

But for people who drank coffee daily the risk was 214.6 cases per 100,000, the researchers report in this week's issue of the Journal of the National Cancer Institute.

Protective effect

They found that the protective effect occurred in people who drank one to two cups of coffee a day and increased at three to four cups. They were unable to compare the effect of regular and decaffeinated coffee, however, because decaf is rarely consumed in Japan.

It's the caffeine in coffee that makes some people nervous and it has been shown in other studies to prompt mental alertness in many people. Some studies have suggested caffeine aggravates symptoms of menopause or intensifies the side effects of some antibiotics. Heavy caffeine use has been linked to miscarriage.

Significant relationship

But studies have also shown that a skin cream spiked with caffeine lowers the risk of skin cancer in mice.

While the study found a statistically significant relationship between drinking coffee and having less liver cancer, the authors note that it needs to be repeated in other groups.

And the reason for the reduction remains unclear.

Amounts of antioxidants

However, Inoue's team noted that coffee contains large amounts of antioxidants and several animal studies have indicated those compounds have the potential to inhibit cancer in the liver.

In their study, the team also looked at green tea, which contains different antioxidants, and they found no association between drinking the tea and liver cancer rates.

"Other unidentified substances may also be responsible" for the reduction in cancers, they said.

No relationship

A separate study reported in the same issue of the journal reported no relationship between drinking caffeinated coffee or tea and the rates of colon or rectal cancer.

However, that analysis did find a 52-percent decline in rectal cancer among people who regularly drank two or more cups of decaffeinated coffee.

In that study, a team led by Karin B. Michels of Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston analyzed data from two large studies—the Nurses' Health Study of women and the Health Professionals' Follow-up Study involving men. The analysis of nearly two million person-years found 1,438 cases of colorectal cancer.

While they did not find any association between cancer rates and consumption of caffeinated coffee or tea, people who regularly drank two or more cups per day of decaffeinated coffee had about half the incidence of rectal cancer as those who never drank decaf.

The rate of rectal cancer was 12 cases per 100,000 person-years among those who consumed two or more cups of decaffeinated coffee per day. For those who never drank decaffeinated coffee, the rate was 19 cases per 100,000 person-years.

That difference may, however, be due to differences in lifestyle, the researchers commented, suggesting that drinkers of decaffeinated coffee might be more health conscious overall. AP

Asian kids still prone to bacterial meningitis

By Charles E. Buban

ASIAN CHILDREN

HAEMOPHILUS Influenzae type B, also known as Hib , is a bacterial infection that can cause a number of serious complications like permanent damage to the nervous system and even mental retardation in children.

Before the 1990s, Hib was the leading cause of bacterial meningitis, an inflammation of the membranes protecting the brain and spinal cord. But it decreased significantly with the advent of new vaccines being given to all children as part of their routine immunization program.

However, this is only true in more than 20 countries, including Australia, Canada, New Zealand, most of Europe and the USA where Hib has been eliminated.

"While safe and effective vaccines to prevent Hib are widely used in developed countries, [immunization programs cover] only 25 percent of the world's children," said Mathuram Santosham, director of the Health Systems Program and professor at the Department of International Health and Pediatrics at the Johns Hopkins University, during the recent "Vaccinology 2004: Focus on Hib in Asia" conference held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

He said as a consequence, many children still die from this preventable disease each year.

Other diseases

Aside from causing bacterial meningitis, the Hib bacteria also can cause pneumonia, an infectious arthritis called septic arthritis, epiglottitis (inflammation of the trachea), otitis media (middle ear infection), cellulitis (a skin inflammation) and pericarditis (a dangerous heart disease).

Santosham said that in many countries, 30 percent to 40 percent of children with Hib meningitis die because of limited access to care, compared to only 5 percent to 10 percent of children in countries where good medical care and appropriate vaccinations are available.

"The lack of access of vaccination programs has contributed to Hib disease being a leading cause of death in children in some of these countries," Santosham said.

In the Philippines, Hib infections are estimated at 142 per 100,000 in children less than 1 year old and 28 per 100,000 in children less than 5. Hib meningitis incidence is estimated at 18 per 100,000 per year in children 2 years and below.

The World Health Organization estimates that Hib is the cause of at least three million cases of serious disease and about 400,000 to 700,000 deaths each year in young children worldwide.

Hib disease usually strikes children under 5, causing mild to serious complications including paralysis, mental retardation and deafness.

Effective vaccine

Santosham said there was a need to speed up information exchange, adopt appropriate measures to manage the disease and emphasize the importance of vaccinations in Asia.

"We have evidence that the Hib vaccine is effective, and we urge health authorities and governments to consider implementing this because only when national immunization schedules are enacted can there be an eradication of this infectious disease," Santosham said.

He said it was important for health professionals to ensure that no child is denied the benefit of receiving promising new vaccines.

The Asian Pacific Pediatric Association, formerly known as the Association of Pediatric Societies of the South East Asian Region, sponsored the conference through an educational grant by the Sanofi-Aventis group to help improve the health status of children in the region.

Community program tames the threat of diabetes

FOR MOST Filipino families, the news that someone in the family—usually an elderly aunt or grandparent—has diabetes is akin to a death sentence. Says Dr. Guia Abad, president of the Association of Municipal Health Officers of the Philippines (Amhop): "It's like having cancer in the family."

For the patient who usually contracts the disease at a late age, the news is depressing. It not only means big medical expenses for life but also being alienated from a food-centric society that indulges in a high-carbohydrate, high-sugar diet. Consequently, adopting healthy habits is usually an overwhelming challenge for the diabetic.

Healthier lifestyles

In the past three years, the municipal health officers who run public facilities catering to the grassroots seem to have made some headway in containing the disease. The ailment now affects 6-7 million Filipinos or close to a tenth of the population. Another seven million are not aware they have the disease. Through the Operation Diabetes program, the health officers have organized diabetics into clubs and in the process gotten them to lead healthier lifestyles.

A diabetic since 1983, Remedios Aeschlmann, 86, does aerobics on Tuesdays and Thursdays and brisk walking every Saturday with co-members of the Diabetic Club of Pilar Village in southern Metro Manila. She certainly has outlived her ailment which still has no known cure. She says she has managed her sugar levels largely by drinking *ampalaya* tea and relying on the encouragement of her group.

The support group of diabetics as well as those with impaired glucose tolerance—considered as early signs of the disease—gather regularly, usually once a week. At meetings, they engage in calisthenics, aerobics and other forms of exercise. The meetings are also occasions for members to test their fasting blood sugar and bring in new members to be checked by the municipal doctor.

Effective program

There are now 75 clubs nationwide and 200 more are in the process of organization. As a model for disease prevention and control, Operation Diabetes has secured the official endorsement of the Department of Health for proving itself "an effective community-based program."

The program thrives on the support of corporate sponsors that assist the clubs by way of glucose meters, test strips, lancets and publicity materials. Thus far, the most help from the private sector has been provided by Herbcare, manufacturer of the *ampalaya*-based Charantia food supplement.

Says Herbcare president Lito Abelarde: "We believe Operation Diabetes is a bold way to get around the perennial problem of grassroots health programs: lack of finances. At the same time, the program introduces us to the concerns of potential clients."

First line of defense

In its early phases, a diabetic club "plows" the minds of the members so they will accept that they need to change their lifestyle and diet, explains Abad. Eventually, the club maps out activities for its members and eventually becomes the community's first line of defense against diabetes and its complications.

DIABETICS in Pilar Village, Las Piñas have found a new lease on life through the Pilar Village Diabetic Club. One of the regulars is Remedios Aeschlmann, a diabetic since 1983 and an active member of the village's Diabetic Club.

She observes: "No country in the world can afford to simply treat its sick citizens. Governments should instead empower the people to deal with their health concerns."

Abad says she is convinced that models like Operation Diabetes have been able to accomplish that feat.

People, Events & Products

E-mail: pr_pep@inquirer.com.ph
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Editor **Aries Espinosa**

DHL provides support, aid to tsunami-hit countries

SINCE the tsunami waves hit Asia, DHL has been responding to calls from the governments, local authorities of the affected countries, and international aid agencies in providing assistance in the deliveries of relief supplies and in extending humanitarian aid.

To date, the business entities of DHL including Express, Danzas Air and Ocean and Solutions combined have raised and contributed more than 350,000 in relief activities, including flight charters, monetary donations, and contributions in-kind to the tsunami disaster; and about 41 DHL offices across the region are directly involved in relief efforts.

One of the most significant relief activities that DHL has embarked on is the flight charters that it has committed in response to requests by governments in affected countries, and international aid agencies to help in the uplift of relief supplies. To date, it has chartered 7 flights, via a mix of DHL aircraft and commercial uplift, to deliver more than 126 tonnes of relief supplies to tsunami-affected areas in the region. Specifically, there were five chartered flights that departed from Bangkok to Phuket, one chartered flight to Colombo from Singapore and another to the Andamans from India.

As official government organizations start to deploy into the affected areas, the need for private companies such as DHL to organize flights and direct aid will diminish, and be supplanted by a continuing need for financial contributions. DHL employees in the AP region have also demonstrated their concern and generosity by contributing more than 42,000. The donation drive ended in the second week of of January. DHL has committed to match, dollar for dollar, all contributions from staff in the AP region.

APPA IN MANILA FOR MEDICAL, SURGICAL MISSION

The Association of Philippine Physicians in America (Appa) headed by its board of governor Dr. Francis Talangbayan is in Manila for a medical and surgical mission in different parts of the region. Rep. Imee Marcos welcomed them during a courtesy visit at her office in Congress. Laoag, Ilocos Norte is one of the places where Appa will be visiting for medical and surgical services. Also in photo is Ducks Unlimited image model April Talangbayan and publicist Ayo Gunting.

the CMM Level 3 Assessment

WESERV PASSES CMM LEVEL 3 ASSESSMENT

WeServ Systems Intl Inc (WeServ) recently passed the Capability Maturity Model (CMM) Level 3 assessment. WeServ, a wholly owned subsidiary of Fujitsu Philippines Inc, started its operations in 1993 and is now one of the largest Information Technology (IT) services firms in the Philippines. It has offices in Tokyo, London and California with headquarters located in Makati City, Philippines which serve major global customers (www.weserv.com.ph). Shown are (front, from left): Mappet Marquez, WeServ telco business director; Neneth Gevana, WeServ president and CEO; Basilio Lasco, WeServ FJ business director; Linda Navarro, WeServ operations support director; Hiromi Suzawa, WeServ FJ business manager; Joselyn Capistrano, SQME's lead assessor; Arthur Tesoro, SQME assessor; Henry Ong, WeServ financial business director; (back, from left): Joey Pengson, WeServ business development director; Noriaki Komori, WeServ FJ business manager.

ABS-CBN's Bantay Bata-Iloilo gets massive support

ILOILO City has found a partner in stopping child abuse with the establishment of ABS-CBN's Bantay Bata-Iloilo. The chapter's successful launch reaped support from various individuals, government and non-government organizations, led by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo who pledged P5 million pesos. Governor Niel Tupas also pledged P200,000, Vice Governor Roberto Armada P50,000, and Iloilo city mayor Jerry Treñas some P100,000. With tie-ups from other child-caring institutions and individuals in the city, at least P5.6 million pesos were already raised for this worthy cause.

"Ilonggos are hopeful that Bantay Bata will be here to stay," says Charie Ginete, ABS-CBN Iloilo station manager. Bantay Bata, the flagship project of ABS-CBN Foundation, is the country's only media-based organization that provides a holistic approach in the rescue and rehabilitation of abused children. It specializes in legal counseling, direct child protection services, children's center, foster care, family services, and even adoption. It also addresses the root of the problem through community education to raise awareness on the issue, especially for its prevention and possible solutions. Ginete said that ABS-CBN Iloilo would ensure an extensive coverage to generate public attention and support. "Our news reporters will also take an active hand in the rescue operations of abused children," she adds.

The launch, held recently at the Lopez mansion in La Paz, Iloilo city, added luster to the city's much-celebrated Dinagyang festival. President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, ABS-CBN chair Eugenio Lopez III, ABS-CBN president Luis Alejandro, ABS-CBN Foundation managing director Gina Lopez, and city and provincial officials graced the event.

THUNDERBIRD, NFGB TEAMS AT NFGB INDUCTION OF OFFICERS

The Thunderbird and NFGB (National Federation of Gamefowl Breeders) teams posed with the honorable Peping Cojuangco (extreme left) of the Philippine Olympic Committee during the induction of the NFGB officers last Jan. 17 at the Sulo Hotel. Shown in photo are: (from left) Edwin Mapanao, Thunderbird marketing director; Boy Diaz and, Jesse Ledesma of NFGB; Dante Nacar, Thunderbird product manager; Dr. Elcid Paraso, Nitoy Nasser of NFGB; and Jun Regala of Thunderbird.

BPI named 'Best Bank'

THE BANK of the Philippine Islands (BPI) was recently named "Best Domestic Commercial Bank" by Asiamoney, the Asia Pacific region's authoritative financial capital markets monthly magazine. Asiamoney also came out with its very own Cash Management Poll. The poll revealed that BPI is the "Best Overall Domestic Bank In Asia-Philippines". The same magazine also had its Trade Poll, which showed that BPI is the "Best Services For All Trade Needs", "Best Customer Support", "Best Product Range", "Best Electronic Delivery Channels/Online Platforms", "Best Overall Domestic/Local Services", and "Most Competitive Pricing". Asiamoney held its "Best Managed Companies Poll" and it named BPI "Best Local/Domestic FX Bank".

In another new development, renowned international publication The Banker awarded BPI "Deal of the Year in the Philippines". BPI was singled out for the following: largest peso-denominated corporate bond issue ever; competitive pricing; and significant development of the domestic capital markets. The recognition from The Banker follows another award: "Best Retail Bank in the Philippines" from the publication The Asian Banker's Excellence in Retail Financial Services Program. It marked the second consecutive time that BPI had won the award.

Even Euromoney voted BPI as "the number one company in the Philippines", citing BPI's commanding lead of almost over 100 percent from the next nearest company.

Asiamoney, meanwhile, named BPI "Best Overall Local/Domestic FX Bank in Asia".

From FinanceAsia, BPI garnered the "Best Bank in the Philippines" recognition. The publication said that BPI is the country's most financially sound and most technologically advanced bank. It also ranked BPI in the top 10 charts of "Best Managed Company", "Best E-Commerce Strategy", "Best in Investor Relations" and "Most Committed to Shareholder Value".

Leading international banking, financial and investment magazine Global Finance hailed BPI as "Best Retail Bank in the Philippines". BPI was chosen based on growth in its assets, profitability, strategic relationship, customer service, competitive pricing, and innovative products.

Reader's Digest likewise awarded BPI with the prestigious "Super Brand Award". It is for BPI's "consistent commitment to provide innovative banking and financial services to its depositors". It also said that it was BPI's "outstanding brand performance in the banking category in the Philippines" that helped the bank clinch the award.

RUBY SWITCHES TO EQ DIAPERS

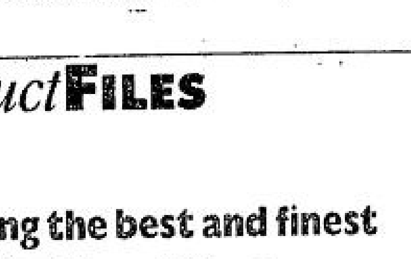
Popular entertainment personality Ruby Rodriguez, now trusts her baby's comfort and protection to EQ Diapers. Enjoying the blessings of two lovely children, the youngest of which is a bouncing baby boy, this practical Filipina mother is always concerned with the well being of her bundles of joy. Happily, Ruby has discovered that EQ diapers is loaded with excellent baby care features like an absorbent core, leak guards, and more recently, an innovative 100 percent breathable cover for rash prevention. And surprisingly, all these features can be enjoyed at the same affordable price EQ has consistently been known for. Because Ruby strongly believes that EQ diapers are the best in the market today, she is very glad to be its product endorser. She sealed this commitment recently by signing up with JS Unitrade Merchandise, Inc, the company that brings quality EQ products in the market through leading supermarkets, groceries, sari-sari stores and drugstores.

Welcome the jolliest mealmates on board

WHAT'S even better than bringing their favorite Jollibee treats for baon? Having their very own Jolly Mealmates that's perfect for school. Get a load of Jollibee's prized catch this season - a fun and exciting take on the ordinary lunch box inspired by the wonders under the ocean. Make meal times even more exciting for kids by giving them this fun yet functional multi-piece lunch kit from Jollibee. Start off by whipping out the Jollibee and Hetty Oceanic Plate, a seabed-inspired saucer matched with a funky pair of utensils. Then, give them the Submarine Champ Tumbler, a cool jug which comes with a built-in straw that transforms their favorite drink into a fountain. And as an added treat, the Jolly Mealmates lunch kit comes with two exciting games that double as containers for small items. There's Twirlie's Go Fish! Basket where they can test their fishing skills and then there's the Yum Catch Kit where Mr. Yum himself will go fishing for them. It's the easiest way to make every lunch break enjoyable for your kids. Get them their favorite Jollibee Kids' Meal Yumburger, Burger Steak, Spaghetti or Chickenjoy and get a hold of all four seansational treats.

Product FILES

Burgoo: Bringing the best and finest



YOUR favorite family restaurant, Anything goes at... Burgoo, had its grand opening at the 2nd Level of the latest and premiere mall in town, The Gateway Mall, in Araneta Center, Quezon City. Burgoo takes pride as the first and only American-themed bar and restaurant in the area with 180 seating capacity. Through the years, Burgoo has continued to provide us tempting meals that come in truly huge servings you can share amongst your companions. Once in a while, Burgoo launches new dishes to keep up with the distinct taste of its customers, with new meals introduced every three months. Above this, Burgoo boasts of their unbelievably low prices in meals, as well as beer for only P25 and cocktails for as low as P50. Anything goes at...Burgoo opens daily from 11 a.m. to 2 a.m. For reservations and inquiries, call 927-7424, 927-7383, 898-1815-17, 687-5254 or 726-3578.

BITS Clips

Paolo Santos at Suburbia

TONIGHT and next Saturday, Suburbia Bar presents an explosive yet romantic line-up as self-taught guitarist Paolo Santos entertains the Malate crowd with a taste of his repertoire on Feb. 19 and 26 with all boy group Wiseguys. Suburbia Bar is open nightly, with a minimum affordable charge of P300 (with two standard drinks). Ladies Night happens every Wednesdays as all females gets in for free. Contact Suburbia Bar Manila at 450-1685 or 86 for special events or other inquiries.

Singles' night out on V-day

THE LEGEND Villas has designed a special Valentine package for singles who wants just to hang out and have fun. The Singles' Night Package (good for 4 to 6 persons) costs only P4,699 nett. You and your friends even families as well can enjoy the night in a Team Suite. The Team Suite is a two-floor offer, furnished with individual beds for your own space and comfort. It also has individual cabinets for your personal belongings. The first floor has dining, kitchen and living room facilities. The offering includes a family-style breakfast in the Suite, eat-all-you-can snacks from the mini bar and complimentary valentine give aways. Promo is valid until Feb. 20. For inquiries and reservations, visit The Legend Villas at 60 Pioneer corner Madison Streets, Mandaluyong City or call 633-1501 to 10. E-mail reservations at roomrsvn@legendvillas.com.ph.

'The Passage' seminar

THE REGINA Rosarii Center for Contemplative Prayer is inviting you to attend a seminar on the "The Passage" which is journey toward wholeness and fullness of life. The journey inward is the longest journey of all. Many of us all living in a world full of pressures, problems, pain that make us lazy to travel towards our inner core and discover there the many potentials we have as a person. The seminar will be held at the Regina Rosarii Center for Contemplative Prayer, #55 Scout Santiago St., Timog, Quezon City on Feb. 19 to 20, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fee is P800 inclusive of snacks and lunch. For reservations, call 372-5327, 0920-2469736, 1919-2694286.

KOA SPEAKS BEFORE BACNOBA

Johnlu Koa, CEO and general manager of The French Baker, recently spoke before the Bacolod, Negros Occidental Bakers Association (Bacnoba) on the 'Role of Various Key Baking Ingredients' at the Quan Restaurant during the launch of Bake Best by San Miguel Inc Flour Business. Koa stressed the importance of understanding essential key baking ingredients that help create a resultant complex flavor, aroma and structure of breads. This knowledge enables the professional baker, as well as the home baker, to achieve quality and consistent results. San Miguel Corp Inc Flour Business, hosted the event where they introduced Bake Best, a double acting leavening agent in free flowing powder form. A second part demo-workshop at the Bacolod Convention Plaza was held the following day.

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G/F MWSI Bldg., MWSS Complex
Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City, Philippines 1100
Tel. Nos. 435-33-66, 920-5521 loc. 3500, 3615, 3616

INVITATION TO BID

The Maynilad Water Services, Inc. is inviting interested and qualified suppliers to participate in the electronic bidding for the supply and staggered delivery of:

Minimum Quantity	Description
27,000 MT	LIQUID ALUMINUM SULFATE

with annual requirements as follows:

1. 17,500 MT-for La Mesa Treatment Plant No. 1
2. 9,500 MT - for La Mesa Treatment Plant No. 2

As per MWSI Technical Specification (Section 32100) & E-Bid Terms and Conditions.

Interested Bidders may, beginning FEBRUARY 18, 2005 up to FEBRUARY 23, 2005, obtain further information and secure a complete set of pre-qualification forms, technical specifications and terms and conditions for a non-refundable participating fee of P3,000.00.

The Electronic Bidding is scheduled on March 10, 2005, Thursday, 2:00 P.M., at Bayan Trade Office (#24/F IBM Plaza, Eastwood City Cyberpark, E. Rodriguez, Jr. Ave., Libis, Quezon City).

For further information, please contact the Manager, Purchasing Department at the following address and telephone numbers:

The Purchasing Department,
MWSS Compound, MWSI Office
Basement, Katipunan Road,
Old Balara, Quezon City
Tel. No. 435-33-66
Fax No. 923-23-03 / 433-5629

(Sgd.) **IGNACIO B. GIMENEZ**
SAVP, Corporate Logistics

(PDI - Feb. 18 & 19, 2005)

Invitation for Bids (IBF)

Date : February 19, 2005
Contract Identification No : PBSP-FV-2005-001
World Bank Grant No : TF026783

1. The PARTNERSHIP OF PHILIPPINE SUPPORT SERVICE AGENCIES, INC. (PHILSSA) has received a grant from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development towards the cost of UPSCALING URBAN POOR COMMUNITY RENEWAL SCHEME-PROJECT and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments under the Contract for **FISHERMAN'S VILLAGE LAND DEVELOPMENT PROJECT.** Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the *Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits.*
2. The **PHILIPPINE BUSINESS FOR SOCIAL PROGRESS,** the Implementing Agency of PHILSSA invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the construction of Roadworks, Storm Drainage System and Communal Sewerage System for the Fisherman's Village.
3. Bidding documents (and additional copies) may be purchased at PBSP Luzon Regional Operations, PSDC Building, Magallanes corner Real St., Intramuros, Manila for a nonrefundable fee of P2,500.00 for each set. Interested bidders may examine the bid documents and obtain further information at the same address. For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a Pre-bid Conference will be held on March 4, 2005 at 1:00 p.m. at PBSP Head Office, PSDC Bldg. Magallanes corner Real St., Intramuros, Manila.
4. Bids shall be valid for a period of 120 calendar days after Bid opening and must be accompanied by security of not less than 2.5% of the Bid and shall be delivered to **PBSP-LRO at PSDC Bldg. Magallanes corner Real St., Intramuros, Manila** on or before 2:00 p.m. March 18 , 2005, at which time they will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.

Note: The dates specified herein shall be revised accordingly once WB NOL is granted.

(PDI - Feb. 19, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Negros Occidental
Municipality of Ilog
– oOo –

INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

February 19, 2005
World Bank Loan No. 4446 PH

1. The Government of the Philippines has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development towards the cost of Local Government Finance and Development and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments under the Contract for the Construction of School Buildings. Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the *Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits.*
2. The **Municipality of ILOG, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL** invites sealed bids from eligible sources for the Construction of School Buildings I (SP-051-IN-01) for the following sites:
   a. Andulauan National High School – Poblacion Extension – 2 Storey – 8 CL
   b. Bocana National High School – Galicia Extension – 2 Storey – 6 CL
   c. Tabu National High school – Balicotoc Extension – 2 Storey – 6 CL
3. Bidding documents may be purchased starting ***February 21 – March 22, 2005 at 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM*** at the ***Municipal Treasurer's Office, Municipal Building, Municipality of Ilog, Negros Occidental*** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of ***Eight Thousand Pesos (P8,000.00)*** or its equivalent in a freely-convertible currency, for each set. Interested bidders may obtain further information at the same address.
4. Bids shall be valid for a period of ***ninety (90) days*** after bid opening and must be accompanied by security of ***Four Hundred Fifty Thousand Pesos (P450,000.00)*** in a form of cash, certified check, bank gaurantee or its equivalent in a convertible currency, and shall be delivered to the ***Municipal Treasurer's Office, Municipal Building, Municipality of Ilog, Negros Occidental on or before 10:00 AM of March 22, 2005*** at which time they will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.
5. A pre-bid conference will held on ***March 9, 2005, 9:00 AM at the Ilog, Multi Purpose Hall, Ilog, Negros Occidental.***

(Sgd.) JOHN PAUL K. ALVAREZ
Municipal Mayor/BAC Chairman

(PDI – February 19, 2005)

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CALOOCAN

LOT 1 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 300 sqm.
Lot 56 Blk 12-A, Ilang-Ilang St., Saranay Homes, Bagumbong
Minimum Bid Price : 428,000.00

LOT 2 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 50 sqm. F.A.: 32 sqm.
Lot 69 Blk 24, Lerida St., Tierra Nova Royale, Phase Iii, Bo. Bagumbong
Minimum Bid Price : 210,000.00

LOT 3 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 242 sqm. F.A.: 85 sqm.
(L10B7) 19 Kalayaan St., Franville 5 Subd., Camarin
Minimum Bid Price : 771,000.00

LOT 4 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 300 sqm. F.A.: 166 sqm.
#289 Camarin Rd., Camarin
Minimum Bid Price : 2,559,000.00

LOT 5 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 264 sqm.
Lot 4 Blk 56, Yellowbelle St., Area C, Phase I, Camarin
Minimum Bid Price : 502,000.00

LOT 6 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 41 sqm. F.A.: 93 sqm.
Lot 15/Blk 8, 885 Brgy. 175 Robes Franville II Subd., Camarin
Minimum Bid Price : 1,035,000.00

LOT 7 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 34 sqm. F.A.: 50 sqm.
Lot 11-G/Blk 9, Unit 11-E Guijo St., Silanganan Subd., Deparo
Minimum Bid Price : 436,000.00

LOT 8 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 23 sqm. F.A.: 43 sqm.
Lot 11-E/Blk 9, Unit 11-E Guijo St., Silanganan Subd., Deparo
Minimum Bid Price : 283,000.00

LOT 9 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 31 sqm. F.A.: 60 sqm.
Lot 11-D/Blk 9, Guijo St., Silanganan Subd., Deparo
Minimum Bid Price : 392,000.00

LOT 10 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 30 sqm. F.A.: 60 sqm.
Lot 11-C/Blk 9, Guijo St., Silanganan Subd., Deparo
Minimum Bid Price : 408,000.00

LOT 11 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 43 sqm. F.A.: 66 sqm.
Lot 11-B/Blk 9, Guijo St., Silanganan Subd., Deparo
Minimum Bid Price : 549,000.00

LOT 12 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 45 sqm. F.A.: 80 sqm.
Lot 11-H/Blk 9, Guijo St., Silanganan Subd., Deparo
Minimum Bid Price : 646,000.00

LOT 13 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 24 sqm. F.A.: 46 sqm.
Lot 11-F/Blk 9, Guijo St., Silanganan Subd., Deparo
Minimum Bid Price : 302,000.00

LOT 14 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 112 sqm. F.A.: 198 sqm.
(Lot 6305) 14 Mother Ignacia Ave., Grace Park (West)
Minimum Bid Price : 2,668,000.00

LOT 15 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 287 sqm. F.A.: 30 sqm.
Lot 8 Blk 9, Guijo Street, Silanganan Subdivision, Llano
Minimum Bid Price : 824,000.00

LOT 16 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 281 sqm. F.A.: 127 sqm.
Lot 9 Blk 9, Guijo Street, Silanganan Subdivision
Minimum Bid Price : 1,146,000.00

LOT 17 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 218 sqm. F.A.: 154 sqm.
Lot 40 Blk 12, # 157 Vista Verde Avenue, Vista Verde Subdivision, Llano
Minimum Bid Price : 1,402,000.00

LOT 18 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 120 sqm. F.A.: 55 sqm.
(Lot 17-B/Blk 354) 132 Binhagan St., San Jose
Minimum Bid Price : 1,822,000.00

LAS PIÑAS CITY

LOT 19 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 350 sqm. F.A.: 165 sqm.
Lot 20 Blk 30, # 109 Camino Real Street, Pilar Vill.
Minimum Bid Price : 2,955,000.00

LOT 20 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 300 sqm. F.A.: 240 sqm.
Lot 13/ Blk 4, # 19-B Heartthrob St., Santos Homes, Pulang Lupa
Minimum Bid Price : 2,284,000.00

LOT 21 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 63 sqm. F.A.: 52 sqm.
L7B10 Santan St. Camella Townhomes,Talon3
Minimum Bid Price : 832,000.00

MAKATI

LOT 22 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 127 sqm.
Unit 333 9Th Floor, Sagittarius Residential Condominium Building I, Dela Costa St.
Minimum Bid Price : 5,284,000.00

LOT 23 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 309 sqm.
Lot 7 Blk16 No.1720 Escuela St., Guadalupe
Minimum Bid Price : 6,397,000.00

LOT 24 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 86 sqm.
Unit 202 Jackson Bldg., Pasay Rd.
Minimum Bid Price : 3,734,000.00

MALABON

LOT 25 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 294 sqm. F.A.: 116 sqm.
(Lot 31 Blk 10) 31 R. Diaz St., Merville Subd., Dampalit
Minimum Bid Price : 1,154,000.00

LOT 26 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 494 sqm.
(Lot 7) #18 Interior M.Aquino St., Niugan
Minimum Bid Price : 571,000.00

MANDALUYONG

LOT 27 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 93 sqm. F.A.: 255 sqm.
Lot 24-A Aglipay (Blumentritt) Cor Gabriel Sts., Old Zaniga, Mandaluyong City
Minimum Bid Price : 3,189,000.00

MANILA

LOT 28 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 217 sqm. F.A.: 80 sqm.
Lot 21-D-4 #2401 Int. 21 Dagohoy, Singalong, Malate
Minimum Bid Price : 2,667,000.00

LOT 29 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 180 sqm. F.A.: 168 sqm.
Lot 2, # 306, Verdad Street, Sampaloc
Minimum Bid Price : 3,060,000.00

LOT 30 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 278 sqm. F.A.: 765 sqm.
2234-2242 Karapatan St., Sta. Cruz
Minimum Bid Price : 4,137,000.00

LOT 31 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 73 sqm. F.A.: 84 sqm.
(L1B15/Super Blk 7/ Area 1) 358 Sta. Margarita Cor Isabel Sts., Tondo
Minimum Bid Price : 499,000.00

LOT 32 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 56 sqm. F.A.: 84 sqm.
Lot 2 Blk 76, No. 323 Zabala Street, Tondo
Minimum Bid Price : 802,000.00

MARIKINA

LOT 33 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 398 sqm. F.A.: 50 sqm.
L5B1 Rolling Hills Dr., Monterey Hills Subd.
Minimum Bid Price : 725,000.00

LOT 34 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 231 sqm. F.A.: 120 sqm.
Lot 1-B, #35 A. Paraluman St., Parang
Minimum Bid Price : 600,000.00

MUNTINLUPA

LOT 35 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 679 sqm. F.A.: 94 sqm.
#126 Interior Nat'L.Road, Bayanan
Minimum Bid Price : 2,487,000.00

LOT 36 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 373 sqm.
(Lot 35-A-2-A) #78 Interior National Road, Putatan
Minimum Bid Price : 2,266,000.00

LOT 37 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 518 sqm. F.A.: 117 sqm.
Lot 283, #9 Sacred Heart St., San Jose Subd.
Minimum Bid Price : 3,366,000.00

PARANAQUE

LOT 38 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 175 sqm. F.A.: 192 sqm.
Lots 20 & 21, Block 1, Matthew St., Annex 35, Better Living Subd.
Minimum Bid Price : 2,000,000.00

LOT 39 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 80 sqm. F.A.: 102 sqm.
Lot 12/Blk 1, Annex 42, Better Living Subd.
Minimum Bid Price : 803,000.00

LOT 40 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 364 sqm.
Lot 45 Blk 27, #31 Pearl St., Severina Diamond Subdivision, Brgy. Marcelo Green
Minimum Bid Price : 1,968,000.00

LOT 41 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 250 sqm. F.A.: 204 sqm.
15119 St. Theresa St., San Agustin Village, Brgy. Moonwalk
Minimum Bid Price : 1,814,000.00

LOT 42 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 93 sqm.
Unit 1404, 14Th Floor, Bayview Int'L. Towers, Tower I, Roxas Blvd.
Minimum Bid Price : 3,558,000.00

LOT 43 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 502 sqm. F.A.: 236 sqm.
Lot 1-B-3-B-2-A, Int. Of Papa Pio St., Sav 12
Minimum Bid Price : 1,868,000.00

LOT 44 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 38 sqm.
(Unit B2-14-3-J2-4) No. 3-A Papaya Bldg. II, Cluster 14, Westmont Village, Parañaque City
Minimum Bid Price : 1,011,000.00

PASAY

LOT 45 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 61 sqm. F.A.: 200 sqm.
Lot C-2-1 Unit 5 Hernandez Townhomes, 56 Don Hernandez St., San Rafael
Minimum Bid Price : 2,940,000.00

PASIG

LOT 46 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 244 sqm. F.A.: 42 sqm.
Lot 16 & 17 Blk 6, # 37 Intramuros St., Metropolis Village, Brgy. Sta. Lucia
Minimum Bid Price : 1,482,000.00

LOT 47 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 202 sqm. F.A.: 120 sqm.
Lot 8 Blk 6, # 52 Kaunlaran St., Rosario 5 Subdivision, Brgy. Sta. Lucia
Minimum Bid Price : 1,198,000.00

QUEZON CITY

LOT 48 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 200 sqm. F.A.: 125 sqm.
(L27B42) #14 Romblon St., Bago Bantay
Minimum Bid Price : 2,092,000.00

LOT 49 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 482 sqm. F.A.: 196 sqm.
Lot 4 Blk. 7 #8 Promenade Lane, Blueridge B Subd.
Minimum Bid Price : 9,153,000.00

LOT 50 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 63 sqm.
Unit 712-B & 712-A, Loyola Heights Condominium, Esteban Abada St., Corner Fabian Dela Rosa St., Brgy. Loyola Heights
Minimum Bid Price : 2,338,000.00

LOT 51 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 63 sqm.
Unit 612-B & 612-A, Loyola Heights Condominium, Esteban Abada St., Corner Fabian Dela Rosa St., Brgy. Loyola Heights
Minimum Bid Price : 2,338,000.00

LOT 52 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 63 sqm.
Unit 312-B & 312-A, Loyola Heights Condominium, Esteban Abada St., Corner Fabian Dela Rosa St., Brgy. Loyola Heights
Minimum Bid Price : 2,218,000.00

LOT 53 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 44 sqm.
Unit 117, Loyola Heights Condominium, Esteban Abada St., Corner Fabian Dela Rosa St., Brgy. Loyola Heights
Minimum Bid Price : 1,929,000.00

LOT 54 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 29 sqm.
Unit 116, Loyola Heights Condominium, Esteban Abada St., Corner Fabian Dela Rosa St., Brgy. Loyola Heights
Minimum Bid Price : 1,267,000.00

LOT 55 - LOT W/ MAKESHIFT IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 1,000 sqm.
Lot 1-A Jasmin St., Dona Juana/ Gilarmi Subd., Brgy. Holy Spirit, Capitol District
Minimum Bid Price : 1,947,000.00

LOT 56 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 229 sqm. F.A.: 64 sqm.
L50B7 Sta Fe & Nieva Sts., Amlacville Subd., Commonwealth, Capitol District
Minimum Bid Price : 928,000.00

LOT 57 - WAREHOUSE BLDG
L.A.: 400 sqm. F.A.: 155 sqm.
L9 B6 #83 F Manalo St Pinagkaisahan, Cubao
Minimum Bid Price : 5,788,000.00

LOT 58 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 80 sqm.
Unit 201, 2F Union Square Condo., 15Th Ave.
Minimum Bid Price : 1,290,000.00

LOT 59 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 50 sqm.
U13 3/F Rsg Condominium, Ermin Garcia St., Brgy.Pinagkaisahan,Cubao
Minimum Bid Price : 933,000.00

LOT 60 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 540 sqm.
L11B1 & L2B5 Kasiyahan St Bgy Holy Spirit
Minimum Bid Price : 1,134,000.00

LOT 61 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 36 sqm.
Unit A L11A Iriga Terraces, La Loma
Minimum Bid Price : 816,000.00

LOT 62 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 364 sqm. F.A.: 159 sqm.
Lot 13 Blk. 33 Butler St., Tumbok Bronx St., Fairmont I Subd. North Fairview
Minimum Bid Price : 2,953,000.00

LOT 63 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 240 sqm. F.A.: 416 sqm.
L6 B2 Remarville Ave., Remarville Subd., Seminary Rd., Bagbag, Novaliches
Minimum Bid Price : 3,560,000.00

LOT 64 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 240 sqm. F.A.: 488 sqm.
Lot 3 Quezon St., Dona Faustina Subd., San Bartolome, Novaliches
Minimum Bid Price : 2,957,000.00

LOT 65 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 869 sqm.
Lot 199-B-3-K, Outskirt Dona Faustina Subd., San Bartolome, Novaliches
Minimum Bid Price : 1,217,000.00

LOT 66 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 526 sqm. F.A.: 384 sqm.
Lot 25 & 27/Blk 41, 98 Alley 2 Corner Alley 7, Project 6
Minimum Bid Price : 5,208,000.00

LOT 67 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 67 sqm.
Unit 407 4F, Mission Garden Condo, #59 Scout Ybardolaza St.
Minimum Bid Price : 1,601,000.00

LOT 68 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 461 sqm. F.A.: 200 sqm.
11- B Elgino St., San Francisco Del Monte
Minimum Bid Price : 6,346,000.00

LOT 69 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 45 sqm. F.A.: 80 sqm.
(Lot 58-C/B225) #17-C Bernardo St., Brgy Manblo, San Francisco Del Monte
Minimum Bid Price : 938,000.00

LOT 70 - CONDO UNIT
L.A.: sqm. F.A.: 96 sqm.
Unit#S 3 & 4, 3Rd Flr. Heart Of The City Condominium, Sgt. Esguerra Corner Eugenio Lopez St., Brgy South Triangle
Minimum Bid Price : 3,192,000.00

LOT 71 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 217 sqm. F.A.: 181 sqm.
(Lots 3/4 Blk3) Soling Lahi Homes, Pasong Tamo, Tandang Sora District
Minimum Bid Price : 1,519,000.00

LOT 72 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 52 sqm. F.A.: 109 sqm.
Lot 27-A, Portion Of Lot 27/Blk 33, #1-A (Townhouse) Bakawan St., Veterans Vill.
Minimum Bid Price : 1,718,000.00

LOT 73 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 94 sqm. F.A.: 247 sqm.
L49B15 48 Sto.Nino St Villa Espana
Minimum Bid Price : 2,596,000.00

RIZAL

LOT 74 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 240 sqm. F.A.: 192 sqm.
Lot 5 Blk 4, 4Th St., Pleasant Homes, Sto.Nino, Angono
Minimum Bid Price : 800,000.00

LOT 75 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 28 sqm.
Unit 306, Covina Townhouse Condominium, Mayamot, Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price : 406,000.00

LOT 76 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 28 sqm.
Unit 307, Covina Townhouse Condominium, Mayamot, Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price : 406,000.00

LOT 77 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 70 sqm.
Unit 103, Covina Townhouse Condominium, Mayamot, Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price : 832,000.00

LOT 78 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 70 sqm.
Unit 104, Covina Townhouse Condominium, Mayamot, Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price : 832,000.00

LOT 79 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 70 sqm.
Unit 105, Covina Townhouse Condominium, Mayamot, Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price : 832,000.00

LOT 80 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 70 sqm.
Unit 106, Covina Townhouse Condominium, Mayamot, Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price : 832,000.00

LOT 81 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 70 sqm.
Unit 107, Covina Townhouse Condominium, Mayamot, Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price : 832,000.00

LOT 82 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 28 sqm.
Unit 303, Covina Townhouse Condominium, Mayamot, Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price : 406,000.00

LOT 83 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 28 sqm.
Unit 304, Covina Townhouse Condominium, Mayamot, Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price : 406,000.00

LOT 84 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 28 sqm.
Unit 305, Covina Townhouse Condominium, Mayamot, Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price : 406,000.00

LOT 85 - CONDO UNIT
F.A.: 28 sqm.
Unit 308, Covina Townhouse Condominium, Mayamot, Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price : 406,000.00

LOT 86 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 75 sqm. F.A.: 66 sqm.
Lot 2 Blk 5, Unit D-20, Far East Asia Village, Brgy. Mayamot, Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price : 823,000.00

LOT 87 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 60 sqm. F.A.: 53 sqm.
L8 B13 House Manson II, Richgate Subd., Mambugan, Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price : 598,000.00

LOT 88 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 544 sqm. F.A.: 276 sqm.
Lots 7 Blk Millflores Cor Ader Sts., La Colina, Antipolo Valley Subd., Bulao, Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price : 2,337,000.00

LOT 89 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 300 sqm. F.A.: 116 sqm.
Lot 22 Blk. 1 #15 Macopa St., Nayong Silangan Subd., Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price : 1,039,000.00

LOT 90 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 1,912 sqm. F.A.: 514 sqm.
Lot 11 Don Celso S. Tuazon Rd., Valley Golf Subd., Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price : 6,088,000.00

LOT 91 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 240 sqm.
Lot 5 Blk 5, Alicante St., Vista Verde Executive Village, Phase 6, Sto. Domingo, Cainta
Minimum Bid Price : 776,000.00

LOT 92 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 450 sqm. F.A.: 165 sqm.
Lot 6, #182 Sunset Drive, Brookside Subd., Sto. Domingo, Cainta
Minimum Bid Price : 2,394,000.00

LOT 93 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 295 sqm. F.A.: 187 sqm.
Lot 6 Blk 12, # 111 Sunrise Dr, Brookside Hills Subd., Cainta
Minimum Bid Price : 1,028,000.00

LOT 94 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 293 sqm. F.A.: 120 sqm.
No. 252 Sampaguita St., Cainta Greenland Executive Village, Cainta
Minimum Bid Price : 1,501,000.00

LOT 95 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 180 sqm. F.A.: 80 sqm.
Lot 4-A-5 Ilang-Ilang St., Aranzazu Subd., Malanday, San Mateo
Minimum Bid Price : 577,000.00

LOT 96 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 481 sqm. F.A.: 180 sqm.
Lot 7 Blk 19, #22 Cruzeiro St, Meralco Sub, Taytay
Minimum Bid Price : 1,364,000.00

LOT 97 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 206 sqm. F.A.: 151 sqm.
Lot 12 Blk. 21 #23 Rizal St. Meralco Village, San Juan, Taytay
Minimum Bid Price : 990,000.00

SAN JUAN

LOT 98 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 443 sqm. F.A.: 180 sqm.
Lot 7/Blk 101, Urbino St., Kabayanan
Minimum Bid Price : 5,383,000.00

LOT 99 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 325 sqm. F.A.: 145 sqm.
Lot 8 / Blk 1, # 104(New) Alley 1, Dona Filomena Subd., West Crame
Minimum Bid Price : 3,816,000.00

VALENZUELA CITY

LOT 100 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 402 sqm. F.A.: 217 sqm.
Lot 10 1308 Mabolo St., Christ The King Subdivision, Brgy. Bagbaguin (Bisalao)
Minimum Bid Price : 2,386,000.00

LOT 101 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 270 sqm.
Lot 7-A-1 #2121 Coloong II Road Cor. M. Ramos St., Mango Groove Subd., Brgy. Coloong II
Minimum Bid Price : 304,000.00

LOT 102 - VACANT LOT
L.A.: 525 sqm.
Lot 2 Palomares Compound, Brgy. Coloong Uno (1)
Minimum Bid Price : 224,000.00

LOT 103 - TOWNHOUSE UNIT
L.A.: 113 sqm. F.A.: 96 sqm.
(Lot 1) No. 1 Antonette Townhomes I, Pasong Balite St., Marulas
Minimum Bid Price : 622,000.00

LOT 104 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 500 sqm. F.A.: 90 sqm.
(Lot 42-A Pasolo Lolomboy Estate) #39(86) Pasolo Rd., Pasolo
Minimum Bid Price : 1,181,000.00

LOT 105 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
L.A.: 263 sqm. F.A.: 68 sqm.
Lots 2738-H & 2739-H No. 082(77) G.Lazaro St., Pasolo
Minimum Bid Price : 995,000.00

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PAMPANGA II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.

Guagua, Pampanga

INVITATION TO BID

Pampanga II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (PELCO II) with office address at Guagua, Pampanga is in need of conductors, distribution transformers, and electrical equipments intended for its rehabilitation and upgrading projects in compliance with R.A. 9136. Listed below are the required specifications and quantity:

PACKAGE I – CONDUCTORS

	Particulars		Quantity
1.	Service Drop #6	–	40,000 meters
2.	Duplex # 1/0	–	30,000 meters
3.	Duplex # 2/0	–	30,000 meters
4.	Aluminum Polythelene 1/0	–	15,000 meters
5.	ACSR 1/0 Bare	–	20,000 meters
6.	ACSR 2/0 Bare	–	15,000 meters
7.	ACSR 3/0 Bare	–	15,000 meters

PACKAGE II – DISTRIBUTION TRANSFORMERS

	Particulars		Quantity
1.	**50 KVA, 7620/13.2 KV, 240 V,** Conventional Brand New Core Loss – 167 watts Winding Loss – 506 watts	–	30 units
2.	**37.5 KVA, 7620/13.2 KV, 240 V,** Conventional Brand New Core Loss – 153 watts Winding Loss – 392 watts	–	25 units
3.	**25 KVA, 7620/13.2 KV, 240 V,** Conventional Brand New Core Loss – 108 watts Winding Loss – 294 watts	–	30 units

PACKAGE III – SUBSTATION EQUIPMENTS

Particulars Quantity

SF6 Circuit Breaker with the following specifications:

a. Rated Voltage : 72.5 KV
b. Rated Lighting Impulse with stand : 325 KV
c. Frequency : 60 Hz
d. Nominal Current : 1,200 amperes
e. Short Circuit Breaking Current : 31.5 KVA
f. Control Voltage : 125 VDC
g. Mechanism : 230 VAC – 2 units

PACKAGE IV – DISTRIBUTION LINE EQUIPMENTS

	Particulars		Quantity
1.	**Power Shunt Capacitor, 150 KVAR, 7620 V,** (13200:1.73 V) Single Phase, double bushing, outdoor use, 60 Hz, Power Capacitor	–	12 units
2.	**Power Shunt Capacitor, 100 KVAR, 7620 V,** (13200:1:73 V) Single phase, double bushing, outdoor use, 60 Hz Power capacitor	–	9 units

We are, therefore, inviting your company to participate in a sealed bid to be submitted to the PBAC Committee on February 28, 2005 Monday at 2:00 PM (1400 Hours) at PELCO II Main Office, San Roque, Guagua, Pampanga wherein your bid will be opened in your presence or that of your representative.

Request further to include in your sealed bids/proposals **the delivery date, terms of payment and availability of stock for evaluation purposes.** Bid for one or two items only is acceptable. The BID BOND is either in the form of cash or manager's check equivalent to two and a half percent (2 ½%) of the total bid price or surety bond equivalent to ten percent (10%) of the total bid price. Bid bond less than the required amount will be automatically disqualified. Bids/proposals submitted beyond the specified date and time will not be accepted.

PELCO II RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, WAIVE ANY OF THE REQUIRED FORMALITY THEREIN AND ACCEPTS THE BIDS ONLY DEEMED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE COOPERATIVE.

(Sgd.) JANET M. QUIAZON
PBAC Chairman
Noted by:
(Sgd.) ENGR. EDGARDO R. PIAMONTE
Team Leader, NEA Management Team

(PDI – February 19 & 22, 2005)

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Tan group seen raising funds for Del Monte Pacific bid

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE LUCIO TAN Group is considering tapping the debt market to finance its bid to acquire a controlling stake in Del Monte Pacific Ltd., officials from the group told the INQUIRER business staff Wednesday.

"We are looking for money but there is no definite amount yet," said Harry Tan, director at Basic Holdings Corp., the holding company of the Lucio Tan Group of companies.

The Tan Group, through Basic Holdings Corp., submitted the highest offer for a 40-percent stake in Del Monte Pacific , a company listed in Singapore but whose manufacturing operations are in the Philippines. The stake, which is valued at about $175-$180 million, is being sold by current owner Italian food maker Cirio Finanziara S.p.A.

Officials, however, said the Tan Group was not in a rush to borrow from the debt markets at this time, especially with the recent downgrading of the country's credit ratings by Moody's Investors Service. The downgrade will make the cost of borrowings more expensive.

Other parties that have expressed interest in Cirio's stake in Del Monte Pacific were food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp., which had submitted a conditional offer; United Laboratories Group of the Campos family, and Sumitomo Group of Japan.

MCI Inc., the holding company of the Lorenzo family and an existing stockholder of Del Monte Pacific, has preemptive rights over Cirio's holdings, which means it can match the final offer for the said stake. The Lorenzos hold a 22-percent stake in Del Monte Pacific.

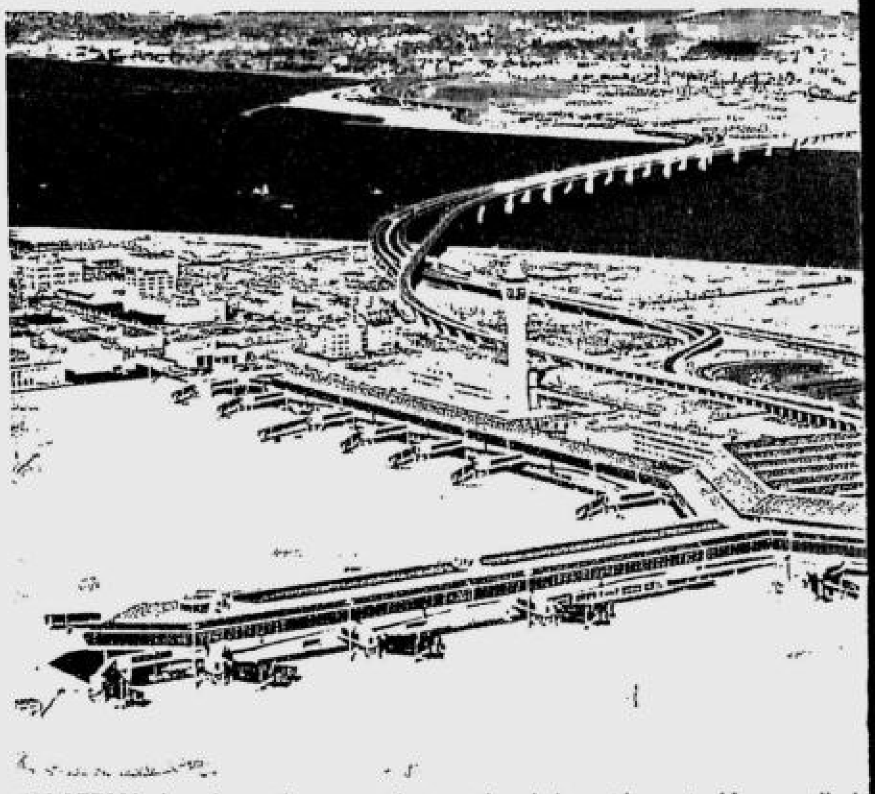
Cirio earlier defaulted on more than 1 billion euros in debts, approximately $1.33 billion, and is now being liquidated.

Cirio earlier accepted the offer of tobacco magnate Lucio Tan to buy out its 40-percent stake in the company. However, Cirio and the Tan group have yet to negotiate and enter into a definitive agreement.

"There is also no certainty that a mandatory general offer for Del Monte Pacific shares will take place," Del Monte Pacific said in its earlier disclosure.

Analysts said the Lucio Tan group might be able to avoid a tender offer if the deal would be structured in such a way that it would end up buying a holding company instead of directly acquiring the Cirio shares in Del Monte Pacific.

The Lucio Tan group of companies include Fortune Tobacco, Asia Brewery Inc., Allied Banking Corp., Philippine Airlines, Philippine National Bank and University of the East.



AN AERIAL view shows the newest international airport in central Japan called
miles) south of Nagoya. The airport, equipped with a 3,500 meters (2.2 miles) ru

Acer moves to regain lead in RP market

By Ronnel W. Domingo

COMPUTER-VENDOR Acer Philippines Inc. (APHI) expects sales to double to P1 billion this year as it pushes hard to regain market leadership in the country, company officials said yesterday.

Ferdinand F. Fetros, APHI business development manager, said in a press briefing the company hoped to repeat its performance last year when sales doubled to P500 million, just a few years after the Acer group realigned its businesses in 2000.

That year, Acer spun off is manufacturing operations— now known as Wistron—to focus on the marketing of its brand name products that include desktop and mobile personal computers, servers and storage, displays, peripherals and e-business solutions for business, government, education and home users.

"We expect our best-selling notebooks to be the main driver for our sales growth projections," Fetros said.

APHI general manager Manuel L. Wong said the company had much room for growth in the country, where Taiwan-based Acer Inc. is performing the weakest in Southeast Asia.

"Overall, we held the fifth or sixth rank in the local market—currently dominated by the IBM and Dell brands—but we believe we can improve to third within the year," Wong said.

Worldwide, Acer says it ranks among the the top ten branded PC vendors worldwide while it supports dealers and distributors in over 100 countries. Revenues reached $15.6 billion in 2003.

Acer first entered the Philippine market in 1992 "under its commitment to answer the nation's computing needs in the most cost-effective way."

Among the firm's long-clients are the Asian Development Bank, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co., Bank of the Philippine Islands, the Department of Education and Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

Food processors seeking sugar allocation

FOOD processors, mostly small- and medium-scale, are seeking the revival of an earlier arrangement with sugar producers that granted the industry specific sugar allocation and price discounts.

The Philippine Food Processors and Exporters Organization Inc. (Philfoodex), speaking for its 250 members, said such an arrangement would enable the industry to do away with importation.

Philfoodex director Edward David said the group would ask the Sugar Regulatory Authority and sugar producers to allocate 1 to 2 percent of the local production for the domestic food industry. The commodity, he added, should be competitively against imports, which now cost about P1,000 to P1,100 per 50-kilogram bag.

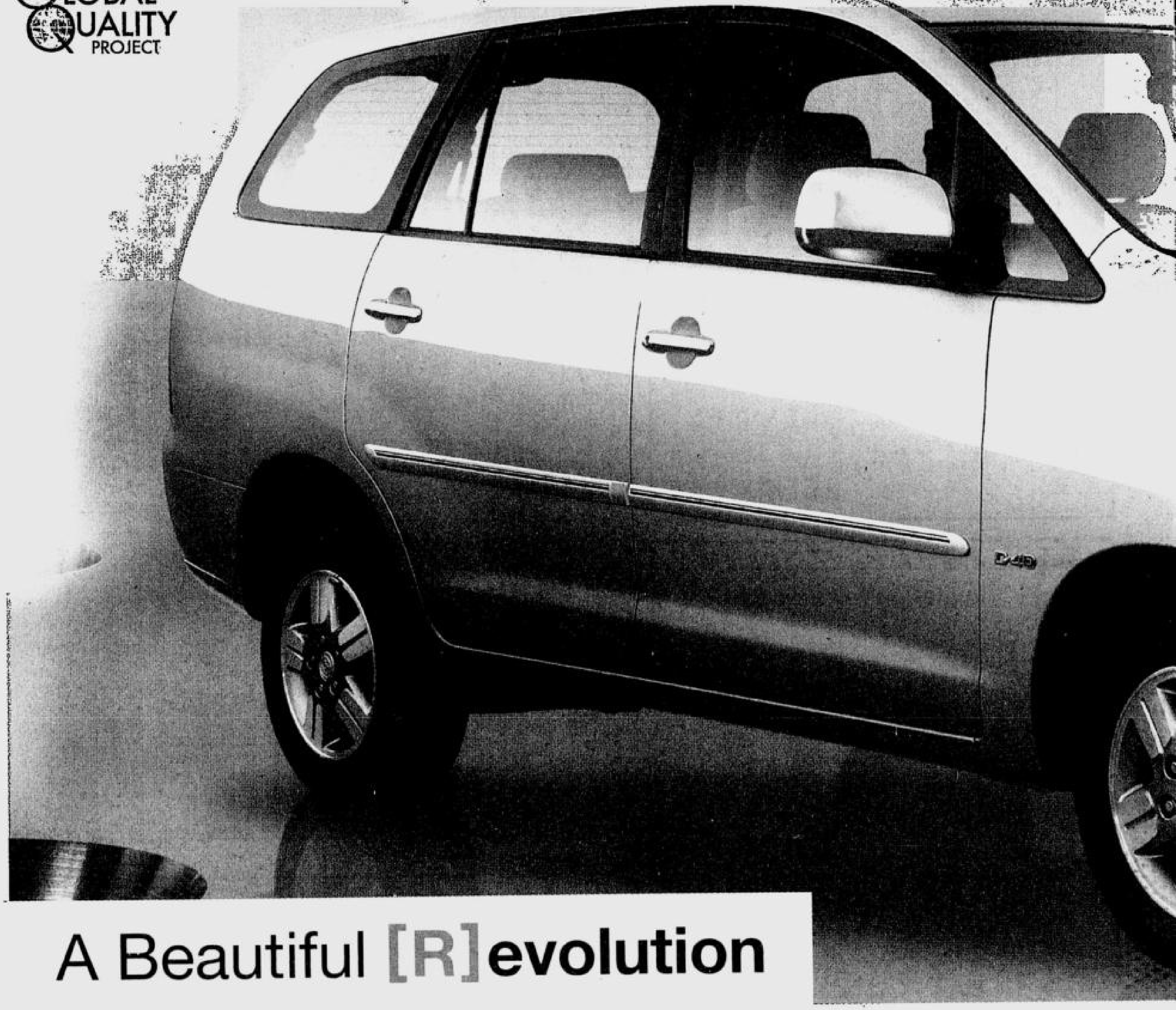
At present, sugar producers earmark 10 percent of their production but only for food processors that export their products, said SRA Administrator James Christopher Ledesma.

Ledesma said that in the past, Philfodex was given a half-percent allocation of local sugar production priced at only P700 per bag for food processors catering to both the domestic and export markets.

"This program with Philfoodex was underutilized and we decided to scrap it for the current crop year. If they want to revive this, it has to be discussed with them first," he said.

He said operational problems in the previous program had to be addressed first.

The country's sugar output for crop year 2004 went up 8.2 percent to 2.339 million metric tons (MMT) over the previous crop year's 2.162 MMT. About 89.5 percent of the total output was classified "B" or domestic sugar for local consumption.



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Be a part of the Innova Family Weekend at your nearest Toyota dealer showrooms on **Saturday, February 19** up to 10PM and the whole day of **Sunday, February 20.** There will be a kiddie drawing contest (10 years old and below) plus fun treats and cool giveaways.

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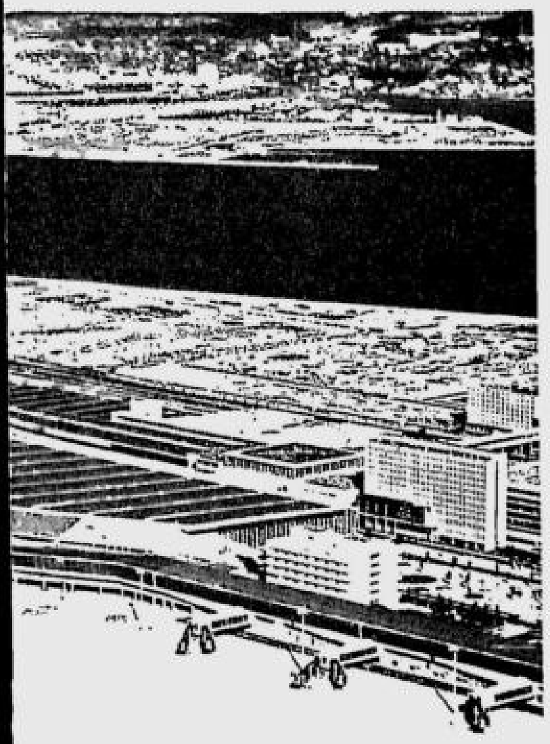


Centrair, off the city of Tokoname, 35 km (22
nway, opened for business last Feb. 17. REUTERS

China's industrial output growth slowed down to 8.9% in January

BEIJING—Growth in China's industrial output slowed abruptly in January to 8.9 percent as policy makers continued their efforts to rein in Asia's second-largest economy, official data showed.

The headline growth rate, announced by the National Bureau of Statistics, marked a steep drop from 14.4 percent in December and an even deeper decline from 19.1 percent in January last year.

"It could point towards a soft landing," said Huang Yiping, an economist with Citigroup in Hong Kong.

"It could be in response to policies to tighten investment last year," he said, warning, however, against reading too much into statistics from just a single month.

The Chinese government spent most of 2004 trying to slow down the economy in order to eradicate bottlenecks, especially in the energy and transportation sectors.

It had only limited success in this endeavor as the economy still grew at the heady rate of 9.5 percent, the highest level since 1996.

Significantly, the industrial output figure reported Friday by the statistics bureau was adjusted for the Lunar New Year holiday, which fell in January last year and in February this year.

If not adjusted for the larger number of working days in January 2005, the growth rate would have been 20.9 percent, the bureau said.

"On the face of it, the January figure looks extremely worrying but it's very difficult to adjust for seasonality," said John Cairns, an analyst with IDEAGlobal in Singapore.

"All other factors seem to suggest that the economy may in fact have re-accelerated."

Other analysts agreed, saying overheating remains a very real threat as continued capital inflows leave China awash with cash, according to Andy Xie, a Hong Kong-based economist with Morgan Stanley.

"Considering that projects worth trillions of dollars have already been approved, overheating in the economy could get considerably worse," Xie said in a research note where he estimated surplus liquidity in China at more than one trillion yuan ($120 billion).

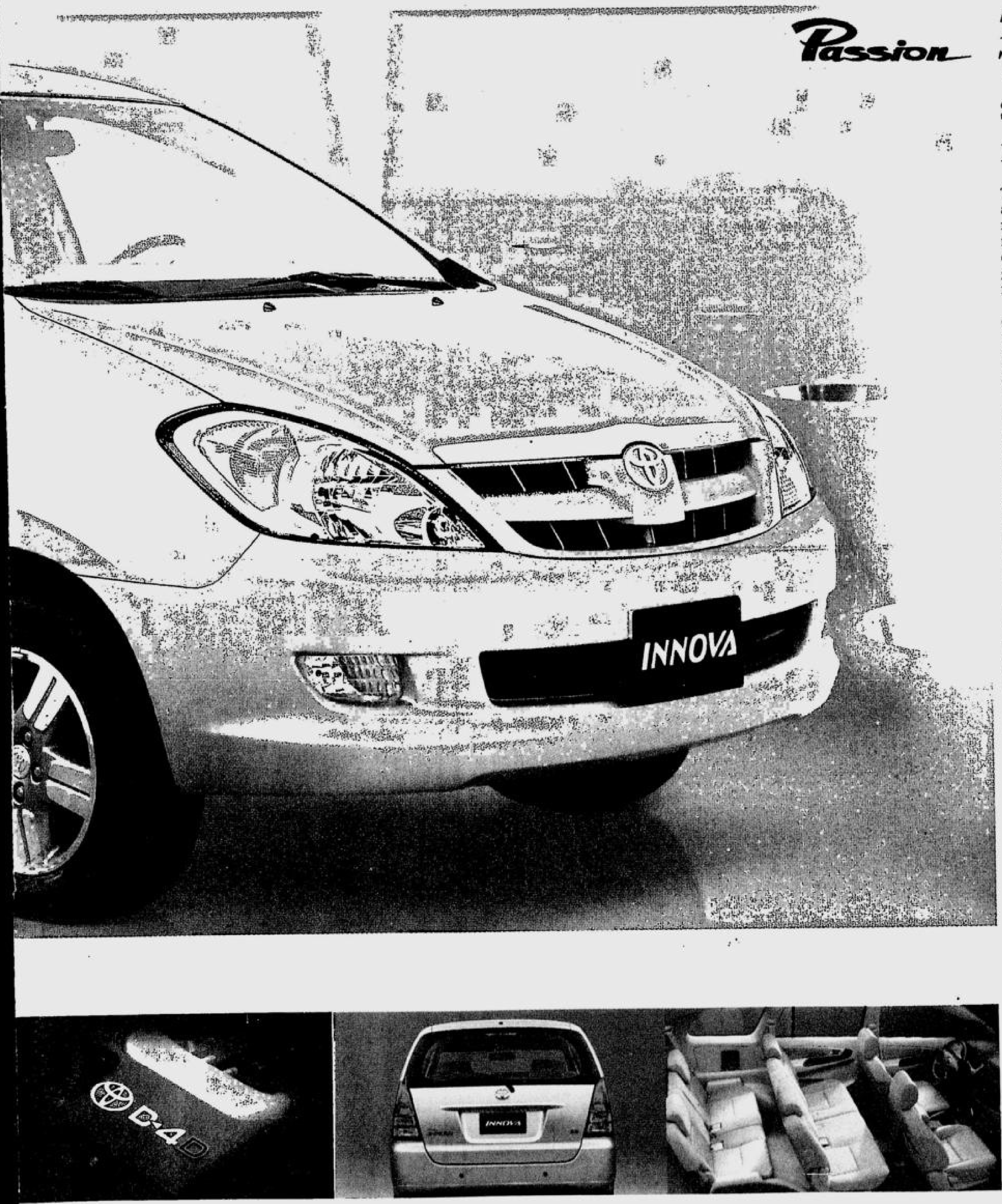
Among recent statistics showing the economy is still roaring ahead, exports jumping 42.2 percent in January from a year earlier.

Overall, overseas demand was a large factor in fueling activity along Chinese assembly lines in the first month of the year, the statistics bureau reported.

It said exports of industrial products alone rose 31.2 percent from last year, even when adjusting for the Lunar New Year period.

China has been accused of keeping its export machine humming by leaving its currency, the yuan, at an artificially low rate, pegged at 8.28 to the US dollar for the past decade.

The January figures could add to the international pressure already piled high on the Chinese leadership to allow the yuan to either rise or flow more freely according to market forces. *AFP*



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TOYOTA

5,800 Japan Tobacco workers seeking early retirement

TOKYO—Japan Tobacco Inc. said Friday that a greater-than-expected 5,800 employees, or more than one-third of the work force in its main tobacco business, have volunteered for early retirement under a cost-cutting program at the world's third-largest cigarette maker.

JT had expected only about 3,500 applicants for the early attrition program, offered to 12,000 employees between the ages of 40 and 59 who have worked for the company at least 15 years, said company spokesperson Tsuyoshi Miyashita.

The program is part of a restructuring plan that includes a 4,000-worker reduction in the parent company's 16,600-member work force between 2003 and 2005 and a closure of eight of its 18 tobacco plants. The company also lowered its projected profit for fiscal 2004 ending March 31 to 56 billion yen ($530 million; 406.4 million euro) from 79 billion yen ($749 million; 574.3 million euro) as it booked an extraordinary expense of 230 billion yen ($2.2 billion; 1.69 billion euro) for the program.

The surprise popularity of the early retirement program, which provides payments equal to three to three and half years of annual salary, reflects concerns among employees about the future of the tobacco business amid a growing health awareness in Japan and declining sales, Miyashita said.

He said the early retirements would cause temporary expenses for the company but would help it save 55 billion yen ($525 million; 403 million euro) annually after March 2007, when the last group of employees in the program leave.

Although Japan's smoking rate remains one of the highest in the developed world, the number of smokers has decreased in recent decades. The nation's smoking rate fell for the ninth consecutive year in 2004 to a new low of 29.4 percent, according to a JT survey.

More restaurants and train stations have created no-smoking sections, and public facilities and hospitals are now smoke-free. Parliament last year decided to order tougher warnings on cigarette packages and is considering restrictions on outdoor advertising.

JT, a former government monopoly, has nearly a two-thirds share of the country's tobacco sales. The Finance Ministry holds a 50 percent stake in the company. *AP*

Singapore's DBS posted record profit in 2004

SINGAPORE—DBS, Southeast Asia's biggest banking group, said Friday that net profit in 2004 rose 97 percent to a record S$2.02 billion ($1.23 billion).

Net profit for the fourth quarter to Dec. 31 rose 10 percent to $321 million on continued loan growth, off-setting lower treasury income stemming from sluggish global market conditions, the bank said in a statement.

DBS said one-time gains in the second quarter of $497 million from the sale of stakes in Thai and Hong Kong lenders had lifted the full-year figures.

Even without the exceptional gains, net profit of $1.52 billion was still the highest ever for the company, surpassing a record of $1.39 billion in 2002.

Net profit, excluding these gains, was also 48 percent higher than the bank's performance in 2003.

"Leaving aside the one-time gains, the drive towards record net earnings started more than eight quarters ago when we dedicated ourselves to growing recurring income from our customer franchise," DBS chief executive Jackson Tai said. *AFP*

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Republic of the Philippines
Professional Regulation Commission
Manila

RESOLUTION No. 2005-267
February 11, 2005

RATES OF FEES AUTHORIZED BY LAW TO BE COLLECTED BY THE PROFESSIONAL REGULATION COMMISSION

Pursuant to Executive Order No. 197 dated January 13, 2000 and Section 1 of Republic Act No. 465, as amended by R.A. No. 6511, in relation to Section 7 (g) of R.A. No. 8981, the rates of fees to be collected by the Commission, as approved by the Office of the President, are as follows:

A. EXAMINATION

		RATE
1.	Licensure Examinations	
a.	Requiring Baccalaureate Degree	P 900.00
b.	Requiring Baccalaureate Degree with Practical Examination/Assessment (except Marine Deck and Marine Engineer Officers)	1,300.00
c.	For Non-Baccalaureate Degree	600.00
d.	For Marine Deck and Marine Engineer Officers:	
d.1.	Written (Theoretical) Examination	900.00
d.2.	Practical Assessment (after passing the Written [Theoretical] Examination)	400.00

(**Nota bene:** *An examinee who, for whatever reasons, failed to report and take the scheduled examination, shall forfeit the fee or fees paid for such examination.)*

2.	Re-examination:	
a.	Written (Theoretical) Examination	900.00
b.	Practical Examination/Assessment	400.00

(**Nota bene:** *Conditionally Passed Examination is taken by an examinee who took a licensure examination with practical examination/assessment [e.g. Dentistry, Optometry, Marine Deck or Marine Engineer Officers] but only passed either the written [theoretical] or practical examination/ assessment.)*

c.	Removal Examination in Subject/s where Examinee Failed	450.00

(**Nota bene:** *Removal Examination is taken by an examinee who obtained a passing general average grade or more but obtained a disqualifying grade/s of less than 65%, 60% or 50% as the case maybe, in any of the subjects. However, in Accountancy, removal examination shall be taken by an examinee who obtained grades of 75% or more in at least four (4) subjects but obtained failing grades in the other subjects.)*

3.	Ocular Pharmacology as provided under Sec. 31, R.A. No. 8050 (Optometry Law)	1,500.00
4.	Licensure Examinations to be conducted outside the Philippines:	
a.	Requiring Baccalaureate Degree	US$ 40.00
b.	Requiring Non-Baccalaureate Degree	US$ 30.00
c.	For removal examination	US$ 25.00

(**Nota bene:** *The above provisions are necessary for giving examination/s without practical examination/ assessment outside the Philippines.)*

B. REGISTRATION (Initial and Others)

1.	For professions requiring baccalaureate degree	P 600.00
2.	For professions/occupations requiring non-baccalaureate degree	450.00
3.	Issuance of Temporary/Special Permit to Para-Teachers under Section 26 (last proviso) of R.A. No. 7836:	
a.	Initial issuance of Temporary/Special Permit (three [3] year validity at P200 per year)	600.00
b.	Issuance (last) of Temporary/Special Permit (five [5] year validity at P200 per year)	1,000.00
4.	Issuance of Temporary/Special Permit or, when appropriate, Certificate of Registration and Professional Identification Card to Foreign Professionals:	
a.	Issuance of Temporary/Special Permit to former Filipino citizens who are allowed to practice their professions under P.D. No. 541 while on a visit, sojourn or when they reside permanently in the Philippines:	
a.1.	For each visit or sojourn	1,250.00*
a.2.	For permanent residents	1,500.00*

(**Nota bene:** *For purposes of the fees to be collected, visit or sojourn shall be for a duration of not more than six (6) months for each visit or sojourn.)*

b.	Issuance of Temporary/Special Permit to Foreign Professionals covered by Section 7(j) and (l) of R.A. No. 8981 (except for professionals in Medical/ Humanitarian Missions)	1,500.00*
c.	Issuance of Temporary/Special Permit to Foreign Health Professionals on a Medical/Humanitarian Mission in the Philippines for a limited period	1,250.00

(**Nota bene:** *The duration of "limited period" shall not exceed one [1] month but may be extended for the same or shorter period when justified by circumstances.)*

d.	Issuance of Certificate of Registration Foreign Professionals who qualify to practice their Profession in the Philippines on basis of reciprocity	1,500.00
e.	Issuance of Certificate of Registration or Temporary/Special Permit to Foreign Professionals Engaged/hired/employed to work in the Philippines pursuant to The provisions of specific Philippine laws and international agreements.	1,500.00*
f.	Issuance of Certificate of Registration or Temporary/Special Permit whichever is applicable to Foreign Professionals other than those covered by (a), (b), (c), (d), and (e) above, but are nonetheless covered by Section 1 of PRC Resolution No. 547, Series of 1998 as amended by PRC Resolution No. 549 series of 1998.	1,500.00
g.	Issuance of Professional Identification Card to Foreign Professionals issued Certificate of Registration/ Temporary/Special Permit under No. 4 (a.2), (b), (d), (e), and (f) above (three [3] year validity at P150 per year)	450.00*
5.	Detailman under Sec. 12, Art. III of R.A. No. 5921 (Pharmacy Law):	
a.	Initial Registration	300.00
b.	Annual Registration [three (3) year validity at P150 per year]	450.00

C. ANNUAL REGISTRATION OF PROFESSIONALS AS PROVIDED UNDER SECTION 1 OF R.A. NO. 465, AS AMENDED BY R.A. NO. 6511, AND ISSUANCE OF PROFESSIONAL IDENTIFICATION CARD

1.	Registered Professionals with Baccalaureate Degree [three (3) year validity at P150 per year]	450.00
2.	Registered Professionals with Non-Baccalaureate Degree [three (3) year validity at P140 per year]	420.00

D. REGISTRATION WITHOUT EXAMINATION

1.	Filing and processing of application:	
a.	Baccalaureate Degree	900.00
b.	Non-Baccalaureate Degree	600.00
2.	Registration after approval of application:	
a.	Baccalaureate Degree	600.00
b.	Non-Baccalaureate Degree	450.00

E. CERTIFICATE, CERTIFICATION and AUTHENTICATION OF DOCUMENTS

1.	Issuance of Certificate for passing examination in Ocular Pharmacology	1,200.00
2.	Issuance of Certifications, per certification	75.00
3.	Authentication of Documents:	
a.	One (1) page document	75.00
b.	Document with more than one (1) page but not exceeding twenty (20) pages, rate of one (1) page document plus P 20 per additional page	
c.	Document with more than twenty (20) pages but not exceeding fifty (50) pages, rate of one (1) page document plus P 15 per additional page	
d.	Document with more than fifty (50) pages, rate of one (1) page document plus P 10 per additional page	
4.	Other Certifications	
a.	Certification attesting to the fact that a person has passed a licensure examination (not a license to practice):	
a.1.	In the form of diploma (certificate with picture)	500.00
a.2.	In plastic card form (with picture)	600.00

F. ISSUANCE OF STCW CERTIFICATES

1.	STCW Certificate of Endorsement [five (5) year validity at P200.00 per year]	1,000.00
2.	STCW Certificate of Competency [five (5) year validity at P200.00 per year]	1,000.00

G. ISSUANCE OF DUPLICATE OR REPLACEMENT OF CERTIFICATES, PROFESSIONAL IDENTIFICATION CARD AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

1.	Certificate of Registration	300.00
2.	STCW Endorsement Certificate	300.00
3.	STCW Certificate of Competency	300.00
4.	Professional Identification Card	250.00
5.	Other Documents	100.00

Nota bene: *Duplicate Certificate is a reproduced copy of the Certificate bearing the signatures of the Members of the Board and the Chairperson of the Commission when the professional passed the examination.* ***Replacement*** *Certificate is a reproduced copy of a certificate duly signed by the incumbent Members of the Board and the (Chairperson of the Commission.)*

H. INSPECTION FEES

1.	For Industrial, Mechanical, Electrical or Chemical Plants or Establishments, Hospitals, Clinics, Mines and Quarries, Other engineering Facilities and in Case of Schools, in coordination with the Commission on Higher Education.	2,000.00
2.	Inspection of Maritime Training Centers	2,000.00

I. ISSUANCE OF PERMIT/LICENSE/AUTHORITY TO OPERATE

1.	Industrial, Chemical, Mechanical and Electrical Plants; Chemical Laboratories; and Commercial and Other Establishments	1,500.00

J. ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

1.	Commercial, Industrial and Related Establishments.	2,000.00

K. REGISTRATION AND ACCREDITATION OF FIRM/ASSOCIATION

1.	CPA Firm:	
a.	Single Proprietorship	1,500.00
b.	Partnership	2,000.00
2.	Review Center for Nurses	3,000.00
3.	Accredited Professional Organization	3,000.00
4.	Practicum Training Institution for Nutritionists and Dietitians	500.00
5.	Environmental Planning:	
a.	Single Proprietorship	1,500.00
b.	Partnership	2,000.00
6.	Chemistry Laboratories	2,000.00

L. DOCKET

1.	Filing of Administrative Case/Complaint against a Professional before the Professional Regulatory Board (plus Legal Research Fee (LRF) of P10.00)	235.00
2.	Filing a Case against a Member of the Professional Regulatory Board before the Commission (plus LRF of P10.00)	300.00
3.	Filing of Appeal taken from a decision of the Professional Regulatory Board to the Commission (plus LRF of P10.00)	460.00

M. REQUEST FOR DATA ON THE PERFORMANCE OF SCHOOLS AND EXAMINEES IN LICENSURE EXAMINATIONS AND RESULTS OF EXAMINATIONS/LIST OF PROFESSIONALS

1.	Performance of Schools in Licensure Examinations (in the form of Certification)	
a.	Data: Number of examinees, number of passers, school passing percentage and national passing percentage, one or more schedules but not exceeding ten (10) schedules	75.00
a.1.	Data: In excess of ten (10) schedules, per schedule	10.00
2.	Ranking of Schools in Licensure Examinations (in the form of Certification)	
a.	Data: Rank of School according to the passing percentage of the school within the category determined by the number of examinees fielded by the school in the licensure examination, per schedule	10.00

(**Nota bene:** *Schedule means examination.)*

3.	Certified List of Successful and/or Unsuccessful Examinees of Schools fielding examinees in licensure examinations with name of examinee and the corresponding grade/rating obtained in the examination per page with twenty-five (25) records	75.00
a.	Succeeding page or pages with twenty-five (25) records per page or less, per record	50.00
4.	List of Professionals with Name, License Number and Date of Registration, per page with twenty-five (25) records	75.00
a.	Succeeding page or pages with twenty-five (25) records per page or less, per record	4.00

(**Nota bene:** *Record means name.)*

N. VERIFICATION

1.	For processing of State Board documents	75.00
2.	Board Results/Registered Professionals:	
a.	Minimum of ten (10) examinees/professionals	75.00
b.	Succeeding multiple of ten (10) examinees/professionals, P100 for each and every multiple of ten (10) examinees/professionals	

O. CORRECTION/CHANGE OF NAME/DATE OF BIRTH AND OTHER PARTICULARS OF PROFESSIONAL

1.	Petition/request for Correction of Name, Change of Name, Date of Birth, Sex, and Reversion to the use of Maiden Name (per petition)	225.00
2.	Petition/request for change of other particulars of professionals (per petition)	225.00

P. REPRODUCED COPIES OF COMMISSION AND PROFESSIONAL REGULATORY BOARD LAWS AND ISSUANCES, SYLLABI, RULES AND REGULATIONS, CODE OF ETHICS, CERTIFIED ALPHABETICAL LISTS OF SUCCESSFUL/UNSUCCESSFUL EXAMINEES AND OTHER DOCUMENTS

1.	PRC/PRB laws and issuances, rules and regulations, syllabi, codes of ethics, and other similar documents:	
a.	One (1) page document	50.00
b.	Document with more than one (1) page but not exceeding ten (10) pages, rate of one (1) page document plus P 20 per additional page	
c.	Document with more than ten (10) pages but not exceeding fifty (50) pages, rate of ten (10) page document plus P 15 per additional page	
d.	Document with more than fifty (50) pages, rate of fifty (50) page document plus P 10 per additional page	
2.	Certified alphabetical lists of successful/unsuccessful examinees and other documents:	
a.	One (1) page list with fifty (50) records, per page	50.00
b.	List with more than one (1) page but not exceeding twenty (20) pages, rate of one (1) page list plus P 20 per additional page	
c.	List with more than twenty (20) pages but not exceeding forty (40) pages, rate of twenty (20) page list plus P 15 per additional page	
d.	List with more than forty (40) pages, rate of forty (40) page list plus P 10 per additional page	

PRC Resolution No. 98-560; PRC Resolution No. 165, Series of 2003; PRC Resolution No. 257, Series of 2005 and such other issuances on the imposition of fees which are inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.

This Resolution shall take effect after fifteen (15) days following its publication in the Official Gazette or in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines, whichever is earlier.

Manila, Philippines.

LEONOR TRIPON-ROSERO
Chairperson

AVELINA A. DELA REA
Commissioner

VACANT
Commissioner

(PDI – February 19, 2005)

PHILIPPINE HEART CENTER
East Avenue, Quezon City
is now accepting applications for
Academic Year 2005

I. 3-Year Fellowship Training Program in Adult Cardiology
- 3 years Residency in Internal Medicine accredited by PCP
- PCP Diplomate

II. 1-Year Subspecialty Fellowship Training Program in Electrophysiology, Cardiac Rehabilitation, Non-Invasive Cardiology and Peripheral Vascular
- Have completed Residency Training in Internal Medicine and Fellowship in Cardiology in PCP and PCC acredited Institutions.
- Submit a research proposal
- Certificate of Fellowship

** Deadline for submission of application is on February 28, 2005*
** Academic Year 2005 starts on April 1, 2005*

General Requirements for Application
1. Medical Diploma
2. Transcript of Records with the Weighted General Average
3. Itemized Board Rating
4. Three (3) Letters of Recommendation (coming from different Doctors specifically the Training Officer &/or Director of the previous Training Programs)
5. Four (4) pcs. 2" x 2" picture colored
6. Certificate of Residency in required specialty
7. Specialty Board Certificate in required specialty

Please address your communications to:
JOSE A. YULDE, M.D.
Assistant Director
Office of Education and Research
Philippine Heart Center
East Avenue, Quezon City

** Deadline for submission of application is on February 28, 2005*
** Academic Year 2005 starts on April 1, 2005*

For further inquiries, please contact Ms. Carmela M. Ocasion (cp# 09192885303) or Ms. Cleopatra Q. Palencia (cp# 09163021735) with Tel. Nos. 925-2401 locals 3234, 3235, 3236 & 3237 and Telefax 926-9622, or you can email to oer@phc.gov.ph

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ASSET DISPOSAL PROJECT
NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION
Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID

"AS-IS-WHERE-IS"

FUEL TANK BARGE "T-228"

DATE OF BIDDING: 10:00 AM / MARCH 10, 2005

The National Power Corporation will receive sealed bids on an "AS-IS-WHERE-IS" basis for the sale of the asset described below:

ITEM / DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	MINIMUM BID PRICE
Lot 1 - One (1) Unit, FUEL BARGE (Non-propelled), "T-228" Material Hull : Steel Length Overall (LOA) : 82.00 meters Length between Perpendiculars (LWL) : 81.26 meters Breadth (Molded) : 25.26 meters Number of Deck : Single Gross Tonnage (Approx) : 2,610 tons Net Tonnage (Approx) : 2,591 tons Fuel Barge Capacity : 40,000 barrels Date Launched : July 17, 1993 Shipbuilder Hull No. : 63	Batangas Coal-Fired Thermal Power Plant, Calaca, Batangas	P26,968,500.00

Interested eligible bidders may obtain bidding documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **Two Thousand Pesos (PhP2,000.00)** at the Materials Management Department office, Ground Floor, Building No. 1, National Power Corporation, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines.

Bids will be opened in the presence of bidder's representatives at **10:00 a.m.** on **March 10, 2005** at the Kañao Room, NPC Solarium, NPC Head Office. Bids shall be accompanied by a Bid Bond (Cash or Manager's Check only) of not less than **ten percent (10%)** of the total amount of bid. The Power Sector Asset and Liabilities Management (PSALM) Corporation have concurred with the bidding process and clearance for the disposal was duly approved.

NPC reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any informality, and to accept such bids as may be deemed most advantageous to the Government.

Issuance of bidding documents is on **February 17, 2005** to **March 7, 2005.** A Pre-bid conference will be conducted at 2:00 p.m. on March 7, 2005 at the Pahiyas Room, NPC Solarium, NPC Head Office. For additional information, please call Asset Disposal Project at telephone nos. 922-3970, and 921-3541 loc. 5582, or e-mail us at lcarabelo@napocor.gov.ph.

(Sgd.) **LEVI C. ARABELO**
Chairman, Task Force on the Disposal of Fuel Barge

Note: This advertisement is also posted on our website: htpp://www.napocor.gov.ph

(PDI - Feb. 18, 19 & 21, 2005)

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CORPORATION FINANCE DEPARTMENT
6th Flr SEC Bldg EDSA Greenhills Mandaluyong City
Tel Nos. 725-8508 726-2204 Fax 727-2000
Website http://www.sec.gov.ph

IN THE MATTER OF
EXQUISITE RESOURCES & FINANCING CO., INC.
(Formerly Exquisite Lending Investor, Inc.)

APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY TO OPERATE AS A FINANCING COMPANY

NOTICE AND ORDER

Notice is hereby given that the above-named corporation has filed an application for a Certificate of Authority to engage in financing business in accordance with Sections 2, 4, and 5 of the Rules and Regulations to implement the Provisions of R.A. No. 8556 (The Financing Company Act of 1998). Its principal office shall be located in Mandaue City.

The applicant's capital structure is as follows:

	Authorized Capital Stock	Subscribed Capital Stock	Paid-up Capital Stock
Preferred	P9,900,000.00	P9,900,000.00	P9,900,000.00
Common	100,000.00	100,000.00	100,000.00
Total	P10,000,000.00	P10,000,000.00	P10,000,000.00

According to the papers/documents presented, the following persons are the directors/officers of the corporation:

Name	Position
Ma. Regina Q. Alvares	Director/President
Adolfo Y. Flores	Director/Vice-President
Britta B. Quisumbing	Director/Treasurer
Eric D. Borja	Director/Corp. Secretary
Nenita G. Renacia	Director

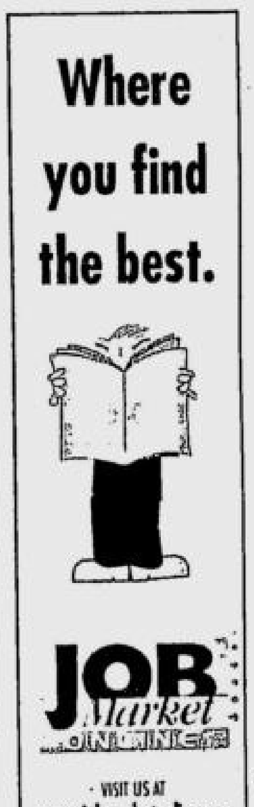
This Notice and Order shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines once a week for two (2) consecutive weeks and shall be simultaneously posted in a public and conspicuous place in the City/Municipality where the office of the company is proposed to be located and in the office of the Commission.

Any interested party may oppose the application in writing personally or through counsel within two (2) weeks after the last publication of the Notice. If the Commission finds that the requirements of R.A. No. 8556, the Implementing Rules and Regulations and other pertinent laws have been complied with and no valid reason exists for the disapproval of the subject application, the Commission shall take appropriate action on said application.

SO ORDERED
January 12, 2005

(Sgd.) JUSTINA F. CALLANGAN
Director

(PDI - Feb. 12 & 19, 2005)



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ROUSSELL JOSUE AREVALO-LAO

of Gasan, Marinduque and Tacloban City

Peacefully joined our Lord on February 17, 2005 at the age of 31.

His bereaved wife **Jennifer**; children **RJ**, **Louise** and **Carlo**; parents **Danny** and **Liza Lao**; sisters **Peng** and **Leng** and brother-in-law **Irvin** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie at the Rizal Funeral Homes, Inc., Libertad St., Pasay City up to Sunday, February 20, 2005.

His body will be transferred to Gasan, Marinduque for 2 days viewing.

Interment will be on Wednesday, February 23, 2005 after the 2 P.M. Mass at Gasan Municipal Cemetery.

JOSE G. IGNACIO

Now peacefully rests in the Grace and Goodness of our Lord on February 14, 2005 at the age of 73.

His bereaved wife **Flora**; children: **Maribeth**, **Edwin**, **Lallet**, **Joann**, **Totoy**, **Lilot**, **Anthony**, **Ryan**, **Joselito**, **Nida**, **Apple**, **Jerric**, grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to join them in praying for his eternal happiness in heaven.

His body lies in state at the Royal Chapels, Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Sucat Road, Parañaque City.

Interment will be on February 23, 2005 at the Heritage Memorial Park after the 1:00 p.m. Mass at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels.

"Eternal life will swallow up that which can die, God made us for this very reason and He has given us the Spirit as a guarantee that we will live again"

2 Corinthians 5:4-5

ALBERTO V. SORIANO

March 28, 1925 - February 17, 2005

His bereaved wife, **Enriqueta**; children: **Karen** and **Amado (Jake) Macasaet**; **Agnes** and **Romeo Alerta**; **Enriqueta (Bebot)** and **Dr. Roberto Zaide**; grandchildren; **Allen** and **Bib**; **Babette** and **Dexter**; **Carina** and **Alem**; **Arvin** and **Maria Agnes**; **Adam** and **Amelu**; **Simon** and **Charis**; and **Jenny**; great granchildren, in-laws, nephews and nieces and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the La Funeraria Paz, Sucat, Parañaque City. Interment will be at the Loyola Memorial Park; Sucat, Parañaque on Feb. 20, 2005 after the 2:00 PM mass.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate;
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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"Even when I walk through a dark valley, I feel no harm.
For you are at my side, your rod and staff give me courage ..."
Psalm 23:4

SIOK TUAN ANG LIM

Peacefully joined her Creator on February 16, 2005 at the age of 77.

Her bereaved family: husband **Joseph**; children and children-in-law **William** and **Doris**, **Wilson** and **Estela**, **Sally** and **Jerome**, **Grace** (†), **Susana** and **Jose**, **Gloria** and **Harry**, **Evelyn** and **Eugene**, **Wilbert** and **Regina**, **Wilfred** and **Edna**; grandchildren and great grandchildren, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the La Funeraria Paz, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation will be on Monday, February 21, 2005 at 8:00 a.m.

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635-0219;
635-0220

TEOFISTA CELI RAMOS

of San Jose, Anda Pangasinan

Peacefully joined our Creator on February 16, 2005 at the age of 62.

Her bereaved children: **MaryJune** & **Jhun**, **Roberto** & **Virgie**, **Ronald** & **Arleen**, **Rogel** & **Beverly**; grandchildren **JM**, **Hammah**, **Jayvee**, **Odette**, **Miles**, **Joyce**, **Nico**; brothers & sister **Elpidio**, **Erming**, **Gorio**, **Beatriz**, other relatives & friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Medicion, Imus, Cavite. Interment will be on Wednesday, February 23, 2005 at the Namagbagan Cemetery, Anda, Pangasinan.

"I have fought the good fight, I have ran the race."

Felicidad Cruz Santiago

BORN-MARCH 7, 1911
DIED-FEBRUARY 17, 2005

Her husband **SEGUNDO A. SANTIAGO** (†), children **LORY** and **FRANK NOCEJA**; **JORGE** and **VICKY WYSON**; **LUZ**; **EVELYN** (†) and **LITO VERGEL DE DIOS**; and **YOLY**; Grandchildren, **Tina**, **Lanie**, and **Ella**; **Michael**, **Emmanuel** and **Chris**; **Czarina**, **Jayson** and **William**; sister, **Magdalena C. Turla**; brother, **Gerry Cruz** and wife **Redy** request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Interment will be on Sunday, February 20, 2005, 1:00 p.m. at the Angat Catholic Cemetery.

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The Officers and Staff of
Rural Bank of Doña Remedios Trinidad Inc. (Bulacan)

would like to extend their heartfelt condolences
to their President Jorge C. Santiago, whose mother,

FELICIDAD CRUZ SANTIAGO

passed away on February 17, 2005.

Her remains lie in state at the family residence in Poblacion, Angat, Bulacan. Interment will be at the Angat Catholic Cemetery on Sunday, February 20, 2005 at 1 pm.

The Board of Directors,
Officers and Staff of
Rural Bank of Angat Inc. Bulacan

extend their heartfelt condolences to the family of their President

FELICIDAD CRUZ SANTIAGO

who peacefully joined her Creator on February 17, 2005.

We shall always be grateful for and fondly remember her distinguished service and invaluable contributions to the Rural Bank of Angat (Bulacan).

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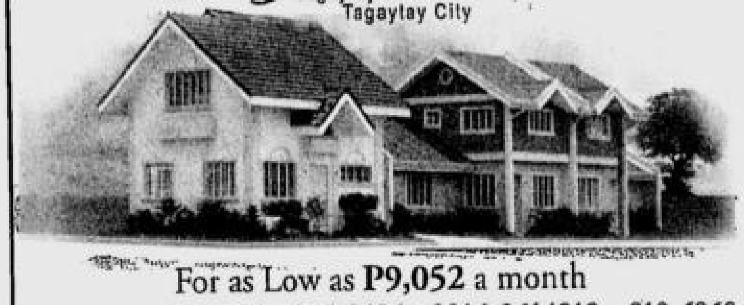

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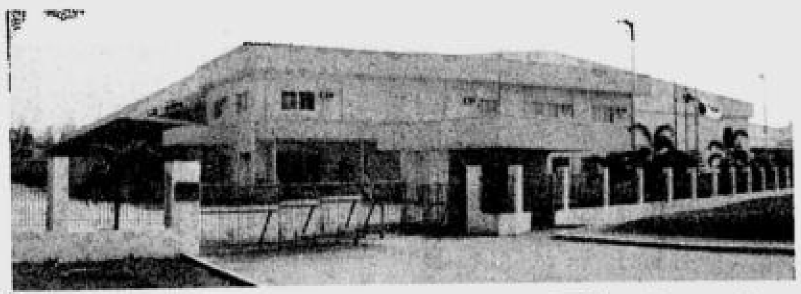

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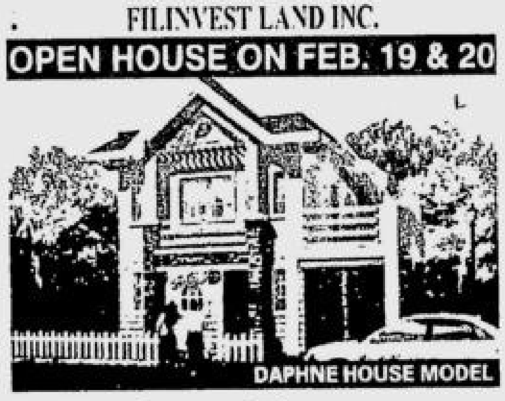

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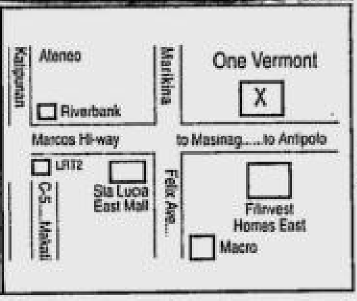

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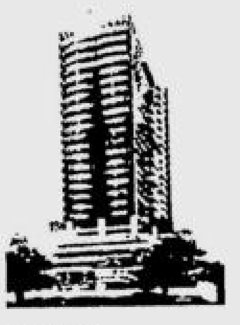

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Registration & Judging of Sporting Grp & Terrier Grp
12:30 PM - 1:00 PM
Registration & Judging of Hound Group / Toy Group
Sunday, Feb. 20, 2005
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Registration & Judging of Non-Sporting Grp & Herding Grp
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AUCTION SALE

MEYCAUAYAN-FILIPINAS Pawnshop, Aliw Complex, Calvario, Meyc. Bulacan. All unredeemed pledges of AUGUST 2004 will be auctioned on FEB. 24, 8:30 am. - Lanuza & Sons-Auctioneer.
(PDI - FEBRUARY 19, 2005)

MUNOZ-FILIPINAS PAWNSHOP,Roosevelt Ave., Katipunan, Diliman, Quezon City. All unredeemed pledges of SEPT. 2004 will be auctioned on FEB. 24, 2:00 PM. - Lanuza & Sons - Auctioneer.
(PDI - FEBRUARY 19, 2005)

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late BIENVENIDO A. LAPUT has been extrajudicially settled by his heirs before notary public Lucila M. Lawas-Yuton as per Doc 161, Page 33; Book 448 Series of 2004 (PDI-Feb. 5, 12, 19, 2005)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given that the S2 License of Dr. Ma. Victoria Gerodias was lost.

NOTICE OF LOSS
Notice is hereby given that Plates No. NXT-520 registered in the name of EM TRANSPORT CORPORATION, was lost per Affidavit of Loss dated Nov. 23, 2004 under the Notarial Registry of Atty. Rodolfo L. Lopez as Doc. 339; Page. 66, Book XIX-A; Series of 2004.
(PDI—Feb 5, 12 & 19, 2005)

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ASSET DISPOSAL PROJECT
NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION
Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID

"AS-IS-WHERE-IS"
FOR THE SALE OF NPC TUGBOAT NO. 2 & 3
DATE OF BIDDING: March 10, 2005

The National Power Corporation will receive sealed bids on an "AS-IS-WHERE-IS" basis for the assets described below

ITEM DESCRIPTION		Min. Bid Price
LOT 1: One (1) unit Unused Tugboat, 3000 PS (Tugboat No. 3)		P34,816,500.00
Length (Overall, without rubber fender/sheal)	33.30 meter (approx.)	
Breadth (molded)	9.20 meter	
Depth (molded)	3.90 meter	
Designed Load Draught (molded)	2.90 meter	
Gross Tonnage (international)	310.00 tons	
Loading Capacity	80.00 tons (approx.)	
MAIN DIESEL ENGINES		
Make	Mitsubishi	
No. of Units	2 units	
No. of Cylinder	6 cylinders	
Max. Continuous Output	1500 PS @1150 rpm	
Normal Output	1350 PS @ 1110 rpm	
Acquired	1998	
Location	Naga, Cebu	
LOT 2: One (1) unit Tugboat (Tugboat No. 2)		P34,896,105.00
Length (Overall)	30.40 meters	
Beam (Molded)	7.40 meters	
Draft Maximum	2.30 meters	
Gross Tonnage	180 tons	
Main Diesel Engine, 2 Units	Detroit 16V-92N 626 PS @ 1,800 RPM	
Generator Engine, 2 Units	Detroit, Type 4-71N 70KW @ 1,800 RPM	
Rated Output	1,200 HP	
Manufacturer	President Marine	
Date Manufactured	1994	
Location	Naga, Cebu	

Interested eligible bidders may obtain bidding documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **Five Thousand Pesos (PhP 5,000.00)** at the Materials Management Department office, Ground Floor, Building No. 1, National Power Corporation, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines.

Bids will be opened in the presence of bidders' representatives at **10:00 AM on March 10, 2005** at the NPC Solarium, NPC Head Office. Bids shall be accompanied by a Bid Bond (Cash or Manager's Check only) of not less than **ten percent (10%)** of the total amount of bid. The Power Sector Asset and Liabilities Management (PSALM) Corporation have concurred with the bidding process and clearance for the disposal was duly approved.

NPC reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any required informality, and to accept such bids that is more advantageous to the Government.

Issuance of bidding documents is on **February 17, 2005 to March 7, 2005.** A Pre-bid conference will be conducted at 2:00 PM on March 7, 2005 at the Pahiyas Room, NPC Solarium, NPC Head Office. Additional information may be obtained from Asset Disposal Project office at telephone nos. 922-3970, and 921-3541 loc. 5582, or e-mail us at *lcarabelo@napocor.gov.ph.*

(Sgd.) **LEVI C. ARABELO**
Chairman, Task Force for the Disposal of Tugboats 2 & 3

Note: This advertisement is also posted in our website: hipp://www.napocor.gov.ph
(PDI - Feb. 18, 19 & 21, 2005)

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(for the year 2005)

The Baguio Water District is inviting all interested and qualified suppliers, traders, manufacturers and dealers to be accredited or have their accreditation renewed with the Baguio Water District for the supply of the following:

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   - horizontal induction motors/submersible motors (5-150 HP), etc.
2. Pipes and pipes fittings as HDPE, Pb. G1, B1, Brass fittings, O-rings, etc.
3. Chemicals
4. Motor controls and other electro-mechanical parts and accessories
5. Construction materials
6. Vehicle, vehicle parts, lubricants
7. Water meters
8. Office supplies and computers

Interested parties are requested to secure the accreditation forms from the purchasing office of the Baguio Water District, BWD compound, Baguio City, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of five hundred pesos (P500.00) from 28 February 2005 to 4 March 2005.

Thank you.

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(PDI - Feb. 18 & 19, 2005)

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BUSINESS

BIR goes after delinquent cell phone card dealers

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue will require telecommunication companies to sell cellular phone cards only to legitimate dealers.

The agency believes the continued expansion of the underground cell phone card distribution business has been depriving the government of needed tax revenue.

Revenue Deputy Commissioner Lilia Guillermo said the BIR would issue a memorandum circular next week directing telcos—Globe Telecom, Smart Communications and Sun Cellular—to require dealers to first show their tax identification numbers (TINs) and proofs of BIR-registration before selling them phone cards.

"This move will force dealers to register their businesses. Once registered, they will be included in our taxpayers database," Guillermo said in an interview with reporters.

She said that upon inclusion in the BIR's database, the cell card dealers' tax remittance could be easily covered in the regular auditing by revenue personnel.

Revenue officers recently met with cell card distributors to discuss with them the results of a BIR study showing discrepancies between their tax liabilities and actual payments in 2003. Guillermo estimated that the BIR lost around P84 billion that year due to tax delinquency of the cell-card distribution industry.

In the meeting, the BIR told the cell card dealers to immediately rectify their tax payments in the previous years or face legal action.

According to the BIR study, 26 of the 80 sample cell card dealers generated gross sales of over P1 billion each in 2003, while 9 earned between P500 million and P1 billion. A total of 18 sold call cards worth between P100 million and P500 million, while five had gross sales worth P50 million to P100 million. Twelve recorded gross sales of between P10 million and P50 million, and 10 of them had gross sales of less than P10 million.

Despite the huge amount of sales, the BIR study also showed that more than half, or 45, of the sample dealers paid only taxes worth less than one percent of their gross sales, while 19 declared they had no tax due at all because of "very low" sales. The rest paid taxes equivalent to only 5 percent of their revenues or lower.

This means that the BIR lost huge amounts from the supposed 10-percent value-added tax and income tax.

The gross sales of each cell card distributor were determined through the Relief (reconciliation of listings for enforcement) auditing system.

Relief uses third-party information to determine one's revenues. In this case, the BIR used sales reports of telcos and list of purchases by clients to determine the gross revenues of the cell card dealers.

The crackdown on illegitimate and tax delinquent cell card dealers is part of the programs of the Business Intelligence Task Force of the BIR. The task force was put up to make a thorough study on the level of tax compliance (or delinquency) of selected industries. The task force uses the Relief auditing system as well as industry benchmarks on revenues to determine one's tax liabilities and match it with the amount of its actual tax remittances.

Aside from cell card distributors, the BIR task force has also started auditing medical and legal professionals, providers of manpower services, and educational institutions. Earlier, the BIR said it was set to conduct lifestyle check on doctors.

The BIR, which accounts for over 60 percent of the government's revenue collection, is tasked to collect P546.4 billion, up from P470 billion last year.

2 semiconductor projects get incentives

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE BOARD of Investments yesterday said it had approved incentive packages for two semiconductor projects worth a total of P162 million.

One project was Analog Devices (Philippines) Inc.'s proposed facility for the production of electronic modules for use in aerospace projects.

ADPI's P53-million plant would create 66 jobs for skilled workers who live near the firm's existing plant site in Parañaque City.

The BOI said the project was granted a pioneer status because this would be the first time that aerospace products would be made in the country.

ADPI is an affiliate of United States-based Analog Devices Inc., which designs, makes and markets high-performance integrated circuits meant for a wide range of signal processing uses.

Among the mother company's product lines is the aerospace products group, which is dedicated to support manned space flight and satellite applications as well as the long-range support of the space market.

In support of the growing importance of this business segment, ADPI put up the aerospace assembly and test lines, which are dedicated to the production of a kind of integrated circuits known as "aerospace products."

Another project, SCG Philippines Inc.'s P109-million facility, is meant for the final manufacturing stages of analog and logic integrated circuits for its Phonex, Arizona-based mother firm ON Semiconductor.

SCP Philippines' new project would be set up in its existing plant site in Carmona, Cavite, and would would create 99 jobs.

Wafer probing is the first step in semiconductor manufacturing, when wafers are electronically tested to detect electrical functionality and manufacturing defects. Assembly and tests complete the integrated circuit production process.

DOTC budget for foreign-assisted projects slashed by 30%

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE DEPARTMENT of Transportation has slashed by 30 percent its budget for foreign-assisted projects this year to P2.16 billion from P3.05 billion in 2004.

The move was in line with calls of the budget and finance departments for cuts in government spending.

"Because of the huge budget deficit," the DOTC reduced its infrastructure budget this year," said Transportation Undersecretary Roberto Castanares in an interview.

The lowering of the budget for projects covered by official development assistance may endanger the prospects of pending foreign-assisted contracts, including the $150-million capacity expansion of the Light Railway Transit Line 1, according to the undersecretary.

Next year, the agency's budget for foreign-assisted projects would go up again to P3.1 billion but the amount had been committed to big-ticket undertakings. Foreign-assisted projects require counterpart funding from the national government.

Transport Secretary Leandro Mendoza said, in an earlier statement, that because of the tight budget, the agency could only provide a P25-million counterpart funding for the LRT Line 1 expansion.

He said next year's budget was only enough to cover five foreign-assisted projects, which include the New Bacolod Airport, the New Iloilo Development Project, the Social Reform-Related Feeder Ports, and the LRT Line 2 extension.

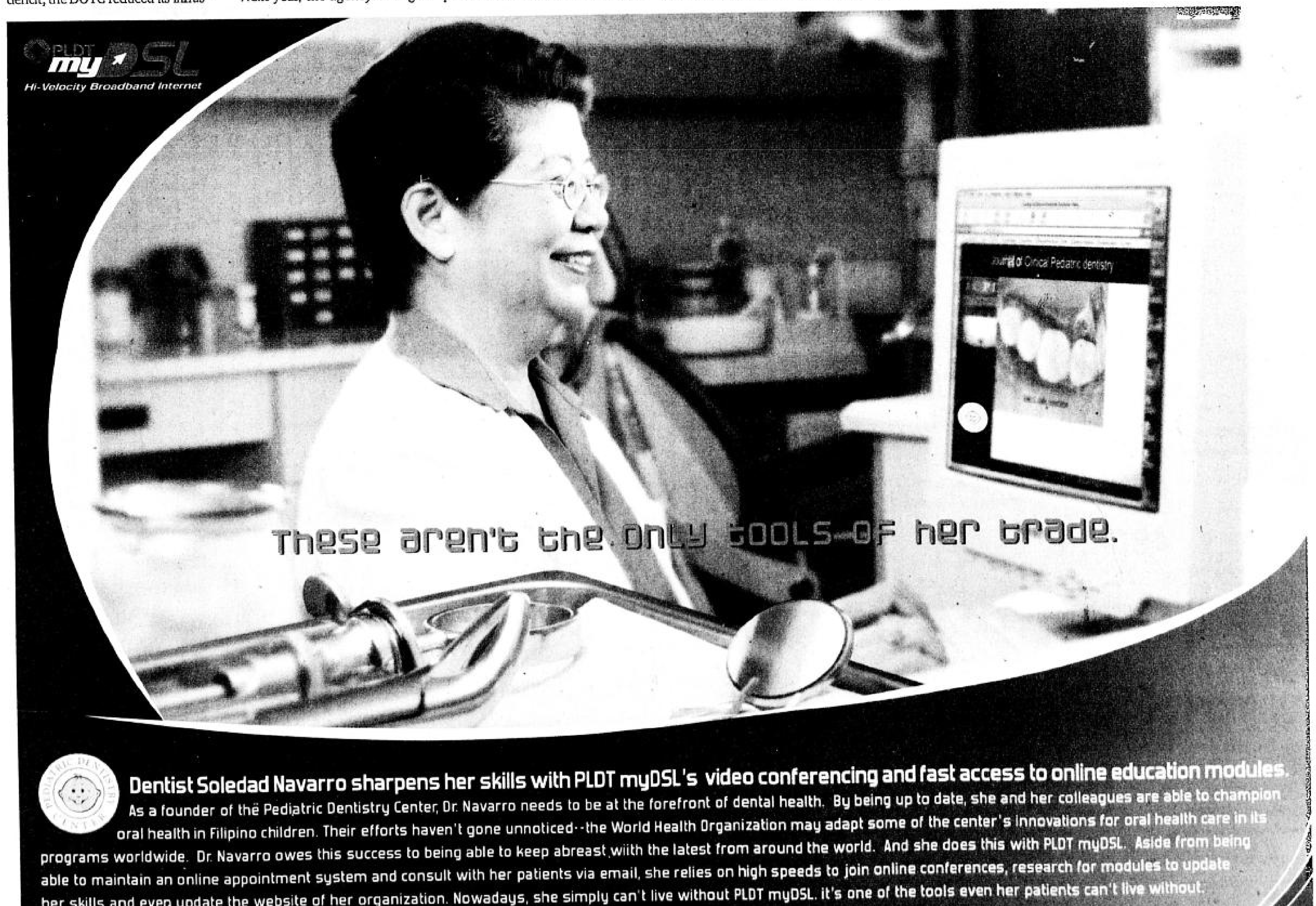
The Japan Bank for International Cooperation had been pushing for the completion of the P9-billion capacity expansion of LRT 1. JBIC said stalling the completion of LRT 1 expansion would cost the government P200 million in additional interest payment yearly.

JBIC lent 18 billion yen for the project.

JBIC chief representative to the Philippines Osamu Murata said completing the expansion would ease commuter travel around Metro Manila and would set the stage for the extension of the Monumento-Baclaran line to Cavite.

JBIC claimed that Mendoza had given his go-ahead to the awarding of the Line 1 expansion contract to Sumitomo Corp. and Itochu Corp.

The Japanese financial institution "urged the Philippine government to proceed with the expansion program as soon as possible because further delay would cost the government P200 million a year."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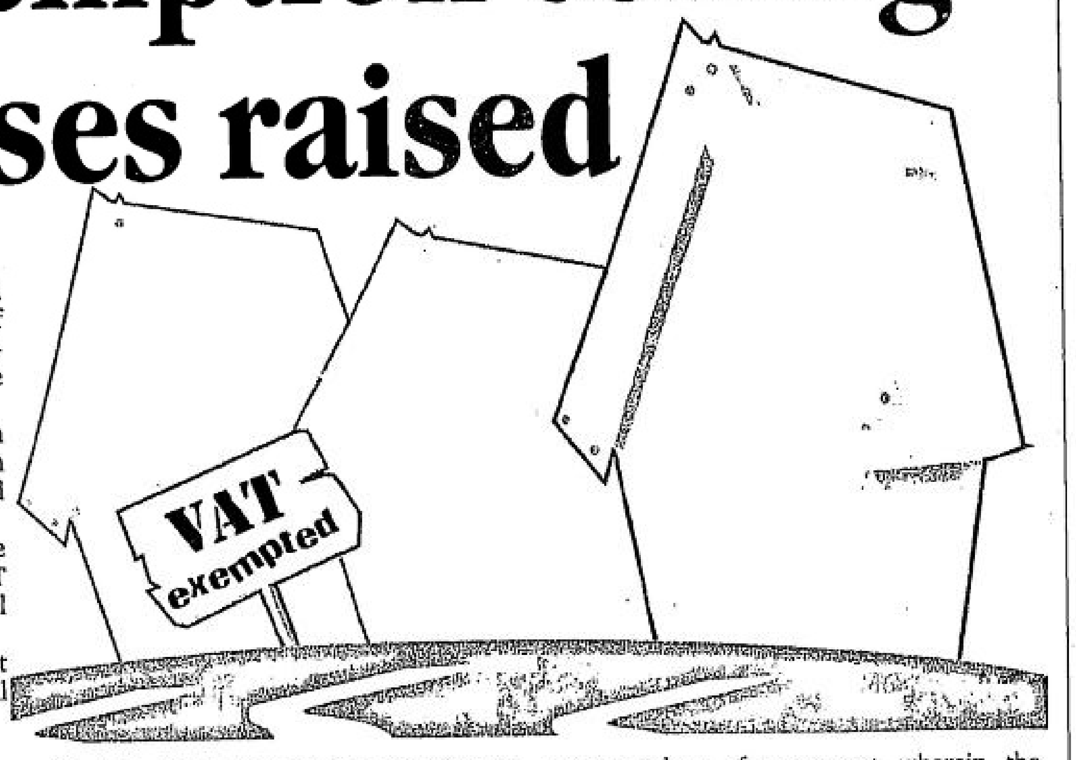
Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

VAT-exemption ceiling for houses raised

By Charles E. Buban



THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue has raised the value-added tax exemption ceiling of three housing categories, a move seen by developers to further drive the growth in the housing industry.

This was announced by the Subdivision and Housing Developers Association which was recently furnished with an advanced copy of revenue regulation 1-2005.

According to the regulation, which will take effect this year, the BIR will exempt from VAT the sale of house and lot and other residential dwellings valued at P1.5 million and below.

This increases the ceiling from the present P1 million as stipulated under the National Internal Revenue Code.

Others raised, too

Likewise, the revenue agency has also raised the ceiling for low-cost housing to P750,000 a unit from the present P500,000; and for socialized housing to P225,000 a unit from the present P180,000.

As defined by the BIR, low-cost housing refers to housing projects intended for homeless low-income family beneficiaries, which may either be a subdivision or a condominium and whose selling price is within the ceiling set under the Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992.

Socialized housing, on the other hand, refers to housing program and projects covering houses and lots or home lots only undertaken by the government or the private sector for the underprivileged and homeless citizens or those projects intended for the underprivileged and homeless wherein housing package selling price is within the lowest interest rates under the United Home Lending Program.

The new BIR ruling also provides that no later than Jan. 31 of the year following the effectivity of the law and each calendar year thereafter, the said exemption ceilings will be adjusted to their present value using the consumer price index.

Very timely

"The BIR amendment is very timely as it will help developers cushion the blow of rising construction costs," said SHDA chair Bansan Choa.

Choa said developers are currently bearing the brunt of the spiraling increase in prices of basic construction materials and other things related to housing production.

"For example, prices of cement and steel products have increased almost 100 percent compared with same period last year," Choa reported.

Series of meetings

According to SHDA national president Marilu Alferez, the new BIR ruling was a product of a series of meetings with different government agencies that started last year.

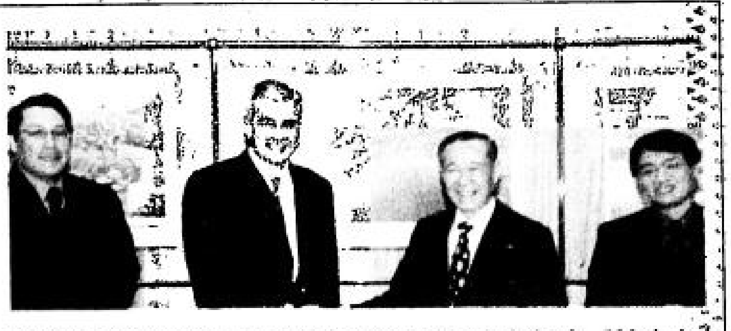
"This culminated last October when the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council, the Department of Finance, the BIR and the National Statistics Office signed a memorandum of agreement wherein the three agencies agreed to adjust the VAT exemption ceiling on the sale of house and lot and other residential dwellings," she said.

It was also in one of these meetings that SHDA proposed to increase the ceiling to P1.75 million, saying this would result in higher VAT payments on the sale of construction materials and services, and higher collection of creditable withholding taxes, transfer taxes and documentary stamp taxes.

Very significant increase

"Nevertheless, the P1.5 million is a very significant adjustment. This should be considered as a major incentive, especially for private home developers who have been key in sustaining the gains achieved by the housing sector in the past few years," said SHDA committee on taxation chair Bienvenido Uy.

He added that the regulation will provide the impetus for a challenging and promising construction industry and ensure that SHDA will be able to attain its commitment of building over 236,000 housing units in the duration of President Macapagal-Arroyo's term.



FROM LEFT are ALI president and CEO Jaime I. Ayala, ALI chair Fernando Zobel de Ayala, Sudeco chair Carlos L. de Leon and Sudeco president Paul Elauria.

Ayala Land signs leisure project agreement

A JOINT development agreement was recently forged between Ayala Land Inc. (ALI) and Subic Bay Development and Industrial Estate Corp. (Sudeco), a real estate holding company founded in 1998, for a high-end seaside residential resort community located near Subic Bay, in the neighboring town of Morong, Bataan.

This pioneering project will involve over 320 hectares of Sudeco's idyllic property, set in a unique environment featuring both mountain and sea.

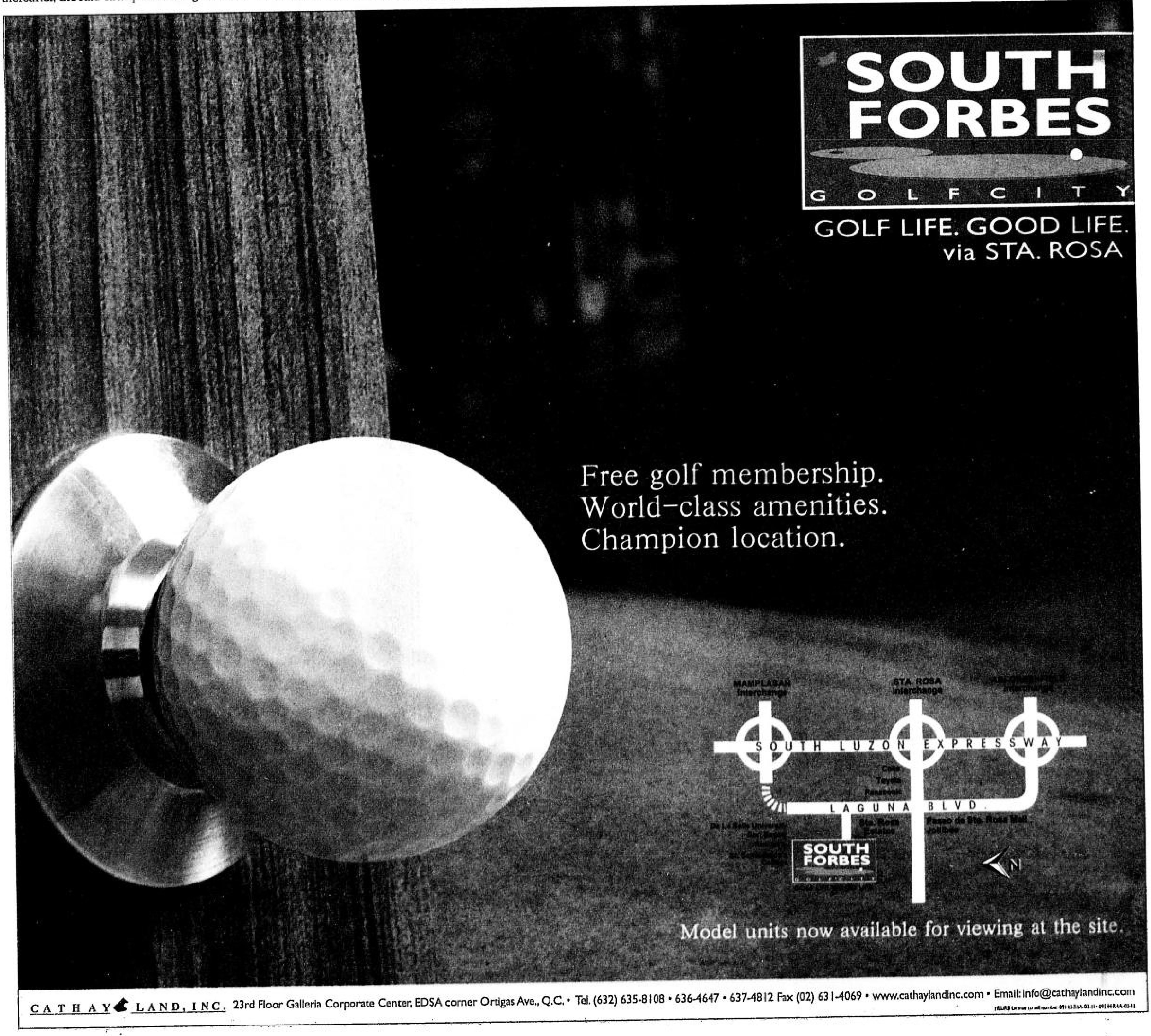
ALI envisions this resort community to be a venue where family bonding memories will be forged in a highly interactive natural leisure setting with its 3.5-kilometer coastline, gently rolling terrain, a peak elevation of 135 meters and spectacular views of Subic Bay and the mountain ranges of Zambales and Bataan.

The project will be Ayala Land's first venture into the leisure market, in answer to the demand for a premiere leisure community that will bear the company's renowned level of quality and commitment in the real estate industry.

Ayala Land is currently fast-tracking the development of the project's Beach and Nature Club, which will form the core amenity of this community and for which membership club shares will be sold.

Other plans on the drawing board include seaside lots, elegant sea view villas and other leisure and recreation facilities, which are seen to establish the project as a weekend destination north of Manila.

For information on Ayala Land projects, call 848-5000, e-mail ayala-sales@ayalaland.com.ph, or visit www.ayalaland.com.ph.



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The 4 Ds of green architecture

GREEN ARCHITRENDS

Amado de Jesus

THE OVERALL goal of green building design is that a built structure is bright, easy to cool, energy- and resource-efficient, functional and healthy. All together, that makes for sustainability, a new buzzword. It means going for the long haul. It means this generation's ability to source its needs without compromising the capacity of future generations to source their own needs.

In green architecture, there are 4 Ds in the life of the building.

The first D is design

The most important step in the integrated process is the design stage. The design process considers the materials, construction methods, overall environmental impact, quality of life, efficiency and costs from many perspectives.

The design process includes site selection and how the building conforms to the features of the site. Climatic and cultural factors are also considered. Can you imagine how intolerably hot a chalet designed for the Swiss Alps would be in the middle of Metro Manila especially in summer?

Building orientation with respect to the points of the compass is analyzed at this stage. Minimizing east- and west-facing windows is a very effective approach to cut down heat gain. This means savings in energy costs.

An exposed site suggests the use of a design that blocks entrance from strong winds, while a sheltered site offers chances for natural windbreaks.

A building interacts with the ecosystem on its site, and the lack of surrounding vegetation is remedied by urban landscape and rooftop gardens.

The design of the building envelope (which means the walls, windows and roof) is also a key element. The building envelope is our third skin. We know what our real skin is; our clothes are our second skin; and the third layer is the building wherein we work. If that third skin doesn't fit, we feel uncomfortable in it.

Sunshades or overhangs and the use of low-emissivity glass reduce heat penetration.

Light color is preferred than dark ones when choosing the color of the envelope, particularly the roof. Light-colored materials bounce off heat while dark-colored ones absorb heat.

The second D is dev't

This is the next crucial process, the development or construction phase. In site planning, it is best to lessen or avoid cut-and-fill practices. Carrying soil off-site or depositing soil onto the site is not a green construction practice. Green developers use their excavated materials within the project site as much as possible.

Existing trees and vegetation should be protected. Large shade trees around a house or building can act as insulation against the sun, thus reducing air conditioning requirements.

It is better to use indigenous plants than imported and exotic plants. Native landscaping does not require much irrigation and chemical treatments.

Recycling of construction materials is now an accepted norm in many countries. It is good practice to make all the workers at the field aware of this environmental practice. It means making use of all possible means to reduce, reuse and recycle building materials. Properly done, this could mean substantial cost savings.

The third D is duration

This means duration or lifespan of the building. This is the phase that affects the quality of life of building occupants. Decisions that have been made in the first two stages, whether beneficial or not, will have a negative or positive effect on the occupants.

Decisions made with regard to natural ventilation and daylight will now have to be dealt with. Some concerns at this stage are:

- **Health** (Do people have asthmatic attacks, headaches, rashes etc. when they are inside the building? In case of fire, will the building materials give off toxic fumes?)
- **Comfort level** (Do people feel uncomfortably hot in summer or cold and damp during the rainy days?)

Regarding the building systems, some concerns are the following:

- Are occupants dependent on artificial lighting?
- Is air-conditioning a necessity inside the house?
- Is water efficiently used?

As for building materials, it is important to consider the following:

- Is the building designed for longevity?
- Are the materials that were used durable and easy to maintain?
- Are materials used locally or regionally available? Or do materials have high-embodied energy? That means the energy needed to grow, extract, manufacture or transport to the point of use. It also includes the embodied energy of its components plus the energy used in construction.
- Does the wood installed come from species that are banned or from destructive forestry practices?
- Do the materials installed produce toxic waste?

The fourth D is demolition

This phase is perhaps the stage that receives the least attention among owners, architects, suppliers and many other members of the building industry. When a building reaches the end of its usefulness, it is normally abandoned or demolished without any regard for its effect on the environment.

Most demolition contractors prioritize big and expensive items such as structural steel, glass and concrete. They just want to get the materials off the site as quickly as they can. The rest of the construction debris ends up in vacant property, and adds to the waste stream. However, with existing landfills reaching their capacity and many municipalities refusing to grant permits for new landfills, the construction industry must now look into adopting an effective recycling system.

Green designers are approaching the problem from material and design decisions. The trend now is to design building products that produce little waste in their use and installation with high value for reuse and recycling. The building itself should also be designed for ease in disassembly and deconstruction. This means, the building must be flexible to accommodate future changes. It also means making buildings with connections that are simple to disassemble.

Conclusion. What's ahead? More studies, more structures, more lessons learned. The objective is to acquire the survival skill of going green. We should incorporate inherent attributes of sustainable design in standard practice.

* * *

The Green Architecture Movement of the United Architects of the Philippines is hosting Green Forum 2005 on Feb 26. With the theme "Saving Energy through Green Architecture and Engineering," the forum will be held at the Legend Villas, Pioneer Street, Mandaluyong City. For details please call the UAP secretariat at 412-6364.

* * *

The author is vice chair of the board of judges of the Asean Energy Awards and is a practising green architect. For comments or inquiries, e-mail amadodejesus@gmail.com.

THE BANGKOK Peninsula, a 39-story tropical high rise with 370 rooms, is the third place winner in last year's Asean Energy Awards, new and existing building category. It has energy-efficient features such as single-loaded corridor oriented toward the west to absorb heat and enhance daylight inside the building. It is equipped with a computerized integrated building management system and has a garbage refrigerator collection system and wastewater treatment facilities.

PARTICIPANTS of the rope course at Ayala Greenfield Estates' Nature Park immensely enjoy the activity.

Ayala Greenfield Estates launches more view lots

THE LAST Sunday of January proved to be a very busy day at the exclusive subdivision Ayala Greenfield Estates. To address the growing demand for new lots in Ayala Greenfield Estates, additional lots with excellent view of Laguna de Bay and Mt. Makiling were launched.

Apart from the view, the new lots are also surrounded by lush greeneries provided by tall trees and dense underbrush. A nature trail will soon be part of this natural landscape.

Wonderful amenities

Guests were able to go see these unique lots, as well as experience the wonderful amenities of Ayala Greenfield Estates at the Village Clubhouse and the Nature Park.

At the clubhouse, guests were able to use the indoor basketball, tennis and badminton courts; the infinity pool; the fishing lagoon and the game room, among others. At the playfield, guests were able to experience the exhilarating rope course, which included activities like rappelling and the flying fox.

Golf lovers, both amateur and professional, also enjoyed practicing their swings at the driving range, where a golf professional was on hand to give them tips.

Annual get-together

Ayala Greenfield Estates, the exclusive residential community ideal for families looking for an active leisure lifestyle, also welcomed delegates from the Manila Golf Paradise-USA Golf Holiday Tour on the same day. The group, made up of vacationing *balikbayans* on hiatus from their work abroad, enjoyed the front nine holes of the course, which were opened recently.

According to participant Rudy Bati, this is an annual get-together with fellow *kababayan* (countrymen) golf enthusiasts that he's been looking forward to attending. He finds the front nine holes a different, challenging experience. "The development's layout, I would say, has both easy and difficult parts," he added.

Another player, Johnny Raniel, was impressed by the Ayala Greenfield Estates' distinct ambiance. "It's beautiful," he exclaimed. "There are spectacular views and fresh air. I think that there will be a lot of golfing fun here. It's really nice and I'm enjoying my game."

Fellow *balikbayan* golfer Philip Basbas, meanwhile, is especially fond of a particular section of the course. "I like the first hole because I made par! It's a nice place. I can recommend it to my friends," he remarked.

Perfect retirement place

The *balikbayans* all agreed that Ayala Greenfield Estates is a perfect retirement place for them when they go back here in the Philippines.

Ayala Greenfield Estates has truly created a lot of excitement among lot owners and guests alike. After opening the first 9 holes last January, the complete 18-hole course will be playable by the second half of the year. Other sports amenities, like bowling, additional badminton courts and billiards, as well as food and beverage facilities will be available toward the end of the year. All of these amenities will eventually become part of the Ayala Greenfield Estates Golf and Leisure Club.

Membership at the Ayala Greenfield Estates Golf and Leisure Club is exclusive to lot owners of the subdivision. From April to June 2005, lot owners can activate their club membership for only P50,000. From July onward, new fees will apply. So grab the opportunity to experience the ultimate golfing experience at this exclusive community. For further details on Ayala Greenfield Estates and other upcoming events, please call 848-5000, e-mail ayalasales@ayalaland.com.ph, or log on to www.ayalaland.com.ph.

The land of opportunity down South

BUSINESSMEN and corporations consider a number of factors on where to set up their shops or offices. Proximity to clients is one. The availability of major infrastructure such as roads, air or sea ports, abundant electricity and communication lines, is another. A major consideration is the presence of a continuously growing population that will require ever-changing products and services.

South of Metro Manila lies the booming Sta. Rosa-Tagaytay corridor. It is the perfect venue to set up a business or office. For one thing, industrial parks host multinational and export-oriented companies that employ millions of individuals. Infrastructure is continuously improving since these are vital to sustaining the growth of auto, information technology and related industries in the area.

To date, however, developments in the area are being undertaken by a number of project proponents and thus call for more synchroneity. While these projects are nevertheless big in scope, the changing business and residential needs of the Filipino call for a new mindset: a full-fledged project that carefully examines and combines the elements required by business, commercial, residential and leisure areas alike.

'Satellite city' concept

Indeed, this an opportune time for leading property developer Cathay Land to introduce the "satellite city" concept to the Philippines.

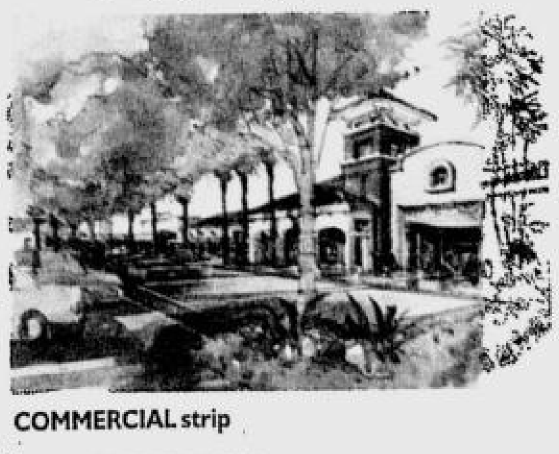
Says Cathay Land president Jeffrey Ng: "The satellite city concept has been warmly embraced by residents and businesses in other Asian cities such as Beijing, Jakarta, Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur. Holistic and master-planned residential enclaves are interconnected with bigger enclaves that host hospitals, schools, malls, office buildings, recreation centers and modern technological parks. With less time navigating through traffic and more time devoted to enjoying the finer things in life, satellite city residents lead quality lifestyles daily."

Perfect site for business

Situated over 250 hectares of a raw, unspoiled environment, the new satellite city aptly dubbed South Forbes Golf City will open a lot of opportunities for companies big and small in the Sta. Rosa-Tagaytay industrial hub. It will be the perfect site for business.

The main commercial avenue will give rise to office towers. Cyberparks with the latest high-tech communications facilities will be home to call centers, IT companies and business process outsourcing (BPO) firms.

After office hours, a stable working client base will flock to restaurants, convenience shops and beauty cum fitness centers. Needless to say, related small and medium enterprises can take advantage of South Forbes and the vicinity's growing population.



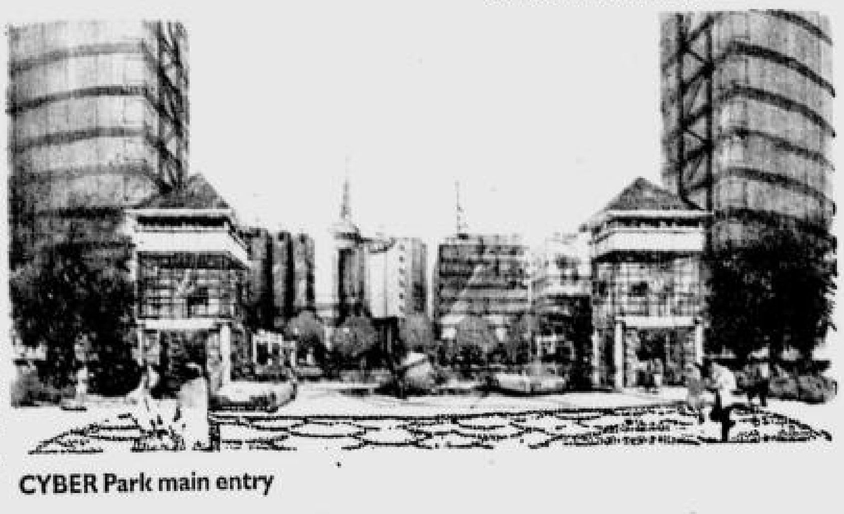
COMMERCIAL strip

Biggest come-on

The biggest come-on for businesses, however, may be the city's constantly rejuvenated workforce. Ng asserts, "South Forbes is ideal for companies like Cathay Land which believe that people are their best assets. The city hosts various entertainment, leisure and sports options for residents to unwind after a day's work. Landscaped parks, clean rivers and lush greeneries are perfect to spending quality time with the family. Plus, a golf course will also rise for our residents' utmost enjoyment and to test their mental abilities.

"With inspired, contented individuals reporting for work daily, teams will perform better. Customers will be greeted warmly and served promptly. Executives and business owners can map corporate plans better after a good round of golf. With all of these people elements coming together, it will not be long before companies post outstanding results," he proudly forecasts.

For any astute businessman, South Forbes Golf City beholds a golden opportunity not to be missed. Business, home and leisure come together in harmony in this idyllic setting. To learn more about the myriad advantages South Forbes Golf City has in store for your enterprise, please call (02) 635-8108 or (02) 636-4647 or visit www.cathaylandinc.com.



CYBER Park main entry

Lecture, updates on real estate taxation

IN ANY real estate investment or project, all the revenues and expenses were estimated and predetermined at its very start or conception, serving as the basis for the acceptance or rejection of the proposed investment. The realization of the projected revenues and expenses can negatively be affected by unforeseen events. One of such is tax penalty and surcharge that can be brought about by neglect, ignorance or incapacity to pay on the part of the investor.

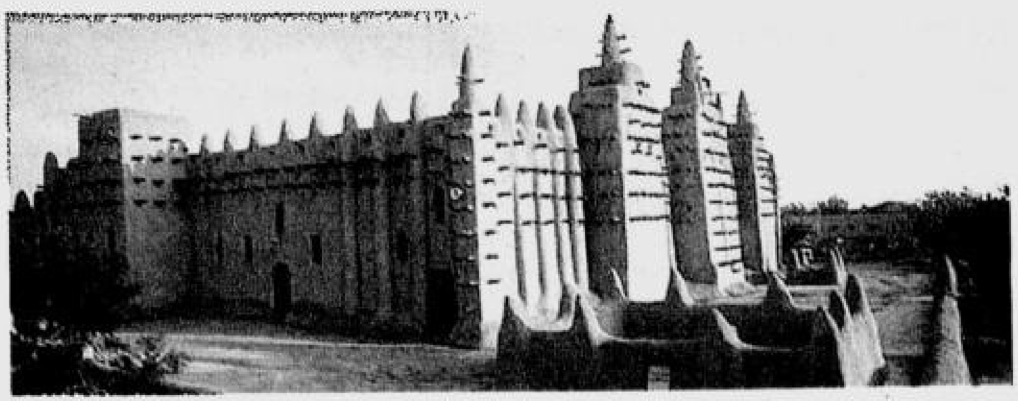
Considering that there are frequent changes and issuances of new revenue regulations, new and would-be investors and even experienced ones should be knowledgeable and be updated on the changes in the taxation rules to pay the correct taxes at the right time, thus avoiding penalties.

In this regard, Urban Institute of Real Estate will conduct a seminar on Real Estate Taxation on Feb. 25, from 1:30 to 6 p.m. at the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) Conference Center, Benavidez St. corner Trasierra St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Topics to be taken are assessment and computation of real property taxes; exemptions, discounts and penalties; taxes on sale, mortgage and lease, value added tax, donor's tax and estate tax. This will include what taxes to pay in any real estate transaction, basis and how to compute taxes, when and where to pay, BIR forms, exemptions from taxes, latest Revenue regulations and other updates.

Urban is also conducting the following seminars which can be attended separately, at the same time and venue: Feb. 16—Investing in Real Estate: Opportunities, Techniques and What Are Needed to Learn before Investing; Feb. 17—Property Development and HLURB Rules and Regulations; Feb. 18—Real Estate Finance and Investment Analysis; Feb. 19—Joint Ventures and Syndications for Real Estate Projects; Feb. 21—Legal Aspect of Sale, Mortgage and Lease with Contract Documentation and Registration; Feb. 22—A Complete Course on Installment Sales; Feb. 23—How to Start and Manage a Successful Real Estate Brokerage Company; Feb. 24—Property Management and Real Estate Appraisal; and Feb. 26—Mathematics of Real Estate Investment.

For details and inquiries, Urban Institute may be reached at 681-0928 or CP 0916-426-9174 or at e-mail urbanet@pacific.net.ph.



THE LARGEST mud building in the world, the Grand Mosque in Djenné

World's largest mud building

AMAZING STRUCTURES

THE LARGEST mud building in the world is the Grand Mosque in Djenné, Mali, in west Africa. Built in 1905, it measures 100 meters long and 40 meters wide, with the design based on the original mosque built here in the 11th century.

The massive Djenné mosque has the Sudano-Sahelian architectural style with the usual wooden spars jutting out of its brown mud walls perpendicular to each other. These beams are part of the wooden frame around which the mosque's mud bricks are clustered. Every year, they are also used as instant scaffolding for the month-long period when the mosque is recoated with mud to keep it in excellent condition.

Skilled craftsmen, known as the Baris, maintain the construction of the mosque which has the tendency to melt every rainy season. Around 4,000 people work together to cover anew the mosque with the mixture of mud and vegetation, giving it its chocolate cake-like exterior. Non-Muslims, however, are not allowed to enter the mosque.

One of the famous landmarks in Africa, the Grand Mosque of Djenné was classified a World Heritage Site by Unesco, along with the entire city of Djenné, in 1988.

Dianne M. Villafuerte

Garage galore

By Dianne M. Villafuerte

FENG SHUI

IT IS usually the very first area that we set foot on and the last we see before leaving the house. The whole family's precious junk—from those rusty kiddie bikes to those boxes of accumulated odds and ends—is dumped on this most neglected part of the house.

We may not know it but garages can also be a feng shui liability. Zaihong Shen, feng shui practitioner and author, tells us that a garage is capable of pulling favorable chi (energy) away from the house if the garage is built much bigger than the house itself. Homeowners should also consider the wideness of the garage door which should be wide enough to let a car easily pass through. A garage door which is too narrow will not only make it difficult for the family car to enter but it may also hinder beneficial chi to pass through. An extremely wide garage door, on the other hand, will enable favorable chi to escape.

It is also a must to keep the garage clean and orderly. Not only will a clutter-free garage make parking fast and easy, it will also erase the impression of arriving at and leaving a home full of disorder and junk. Homeowners can even place plants in the garage to diffuse the noxious fumes from the vehicles and install cupboards where clutter can be stored instead of leaving it just lying about.

RP headquarters for Convergys

AYALA Land, the country's leading real estate developer, has started construction on the dedicated, build-to-suit Philippine headquarters of Convergys, a global leader in integrated billing, employee care and customer care services.

Ayala Land Inc. has commenced work on the build-to-suit edifice simply called Convergys. Set to rise in a prime location in the heart of the Makati Central Business District, the eight-story Convergys facility will be on Ayala Avenue corners Salcedo and Dela Rosa streets.

The building will be a fitting home to more than 3,000 Convergys employees. Aside from providing much-needed jobs, the project represents Ayala Land's enduring commitment to explore the unlimited opportunities in the business process outsourcing (BPO) industry.

Convergys as flagship tenant will occupy about 14,000 square meters.

With its completion in November, Convergys will further solidify its strong presence in the country. With now 4,000 workstations in Manila, it is delivering a diverse portfolio of customer care solutions.

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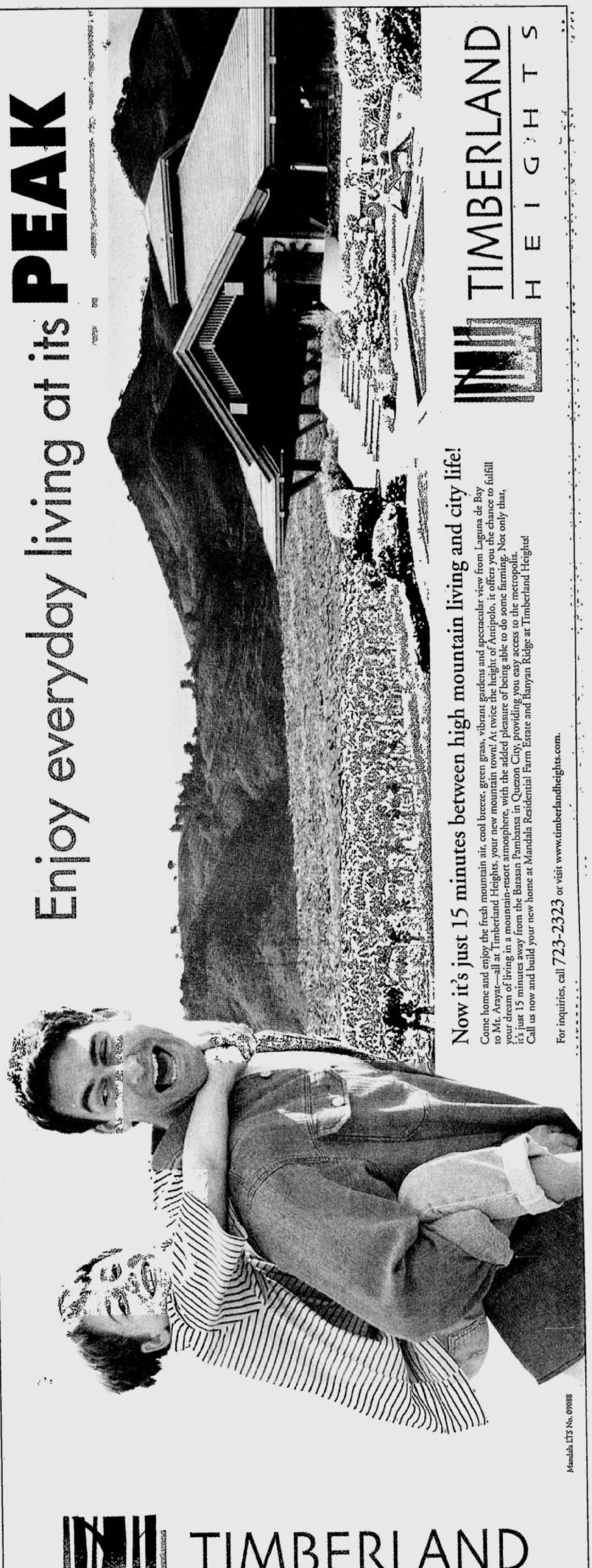
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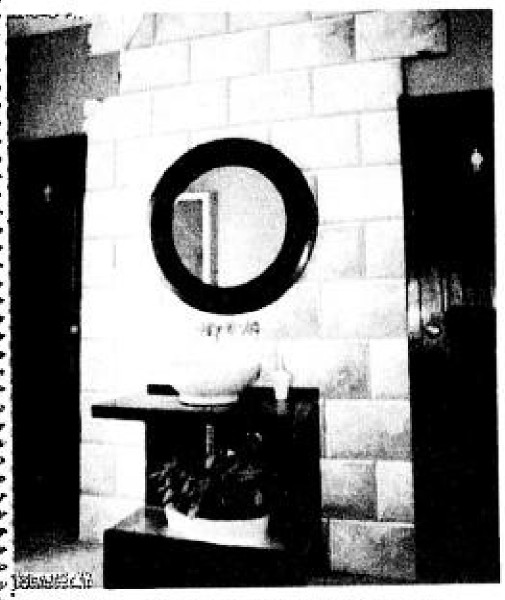
The truth about illusions

INTO SPACE

Pinky Cruz

TO QUOTE King Solomon, the greatest teacher of all time, "There is nothing new under the sun." Not entirely, though. I must say that you can create something new under your roof.

Take for instance the most common of all walls that have been mostly neglected in designing our shelters. Painting surfaces such as walls and ceilings for some is just an issue of coloring it red or blue, gloss or matte, light or dark. Can it be simpler than that? Murals, or the fine art of creating an illusion, on any given surface, is used even during prehistoric times. This is because man's need to dramatize his colorful existence seeks to find an outlet. Reaching its pinnacle during the Renaissance in glorious Italy, it inspired the great masters like Michaelangelo and Brunelleschi to transform plain ceilings and church walls to larger-than-life visual creations that breathed life.



IS it for real or not? In the washroom of Portofino office, artist Cortez painted a backdrop of stone blocks to dramatize an otherwise flat wall.

Now, in an era where chaos is the order of the day, do we have room for this art? I say, yes. At its most basic, a mural can expand any given space, allowing us to go beyond walls. At its finest, it is a design coming in full circle, allowing planes and forms to continue in a grander scale. And in essence, nothing separates man more than this unique mastery of brush to give new dimension to the space wherein he lives and works.

Fool the eye

Trompe-L'oeil, a French phrase that means "fool the eye," is a beautiful remedy for awkward space allocation. This might be the most creative tool to convey your design theme. The challenge is to achieve total realism from any angle or perspective.

Trompe-L'oeil is very effective on small spaces, say, your powder room or a niche in a sitting area, to allow one to smile at himself in both surprise and confusion. Legend has it that Giotto, an art apprentice in 13th century Florence, pulled a prank by painting a fly on a portrait, and it looked so real his mentor tried to brush it off. Today, this business of total realism that injects humor is no laughing matter.

A fine, thin line

While it may be true that Sistine-like ceilings are confined to the theater nowadays, large-wall murals, if planned and done tastefully and contextually by artists, remain one of the most exquisite ways to impact a setting. Restaurants maximize it to create a thematic atmosphere, depicting a Venice rendezvous that not only romanticizes the ambiance but also announces its Italian cuisine no menu boards can aptly describe.

Then there are decorative paintings (which happen to be the most popular) to suggest a nostalgic past, a romantic tryst, or a whimsical fantasy. Hallways, garden patios, dividers, entryways and kids' rooms are the best areas to showcase this artwork.

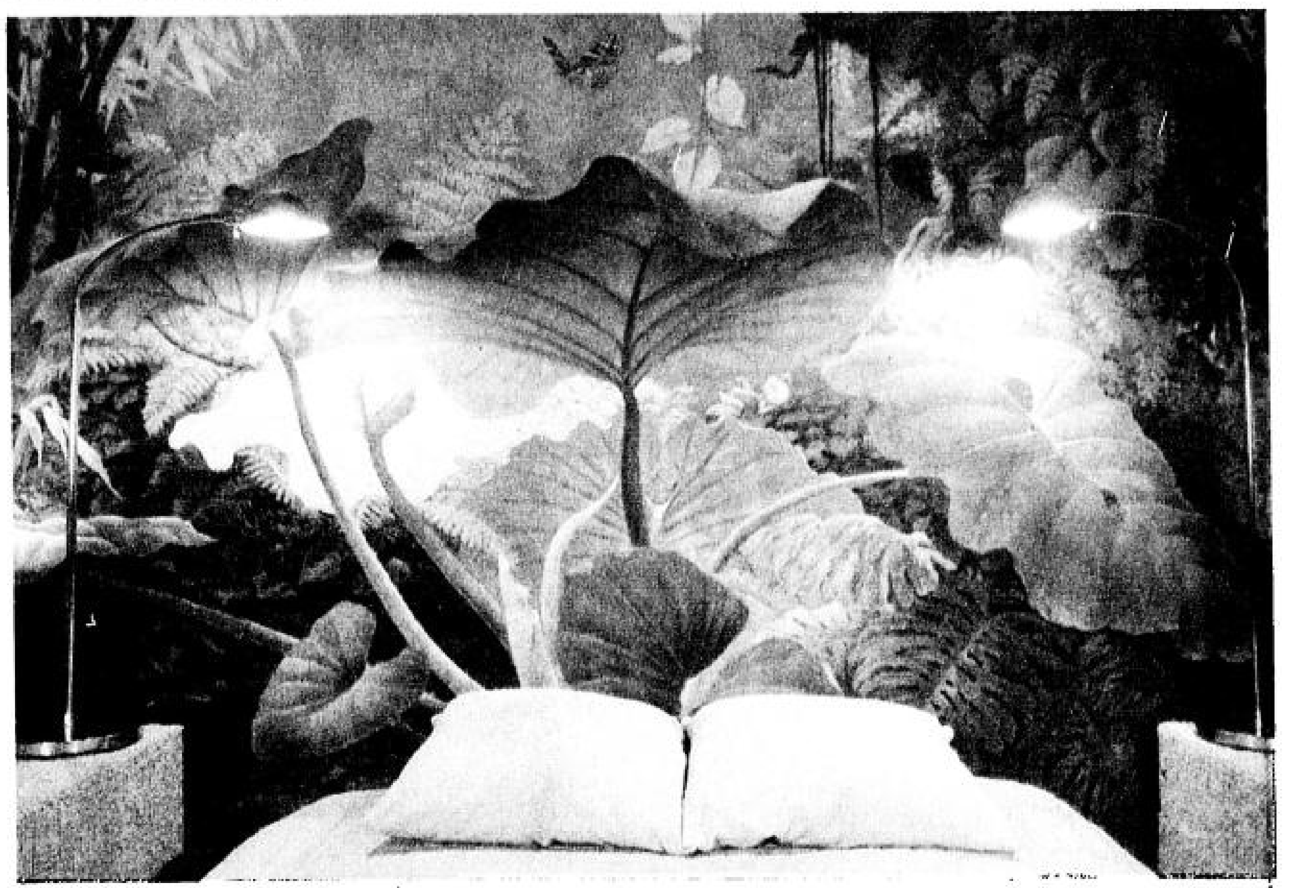
Unveiling the unreal

In its most classic roots and rich splendor that have so characterized them, this magical tool of the trade has reemerged today in the most radical and contemporary expressions.

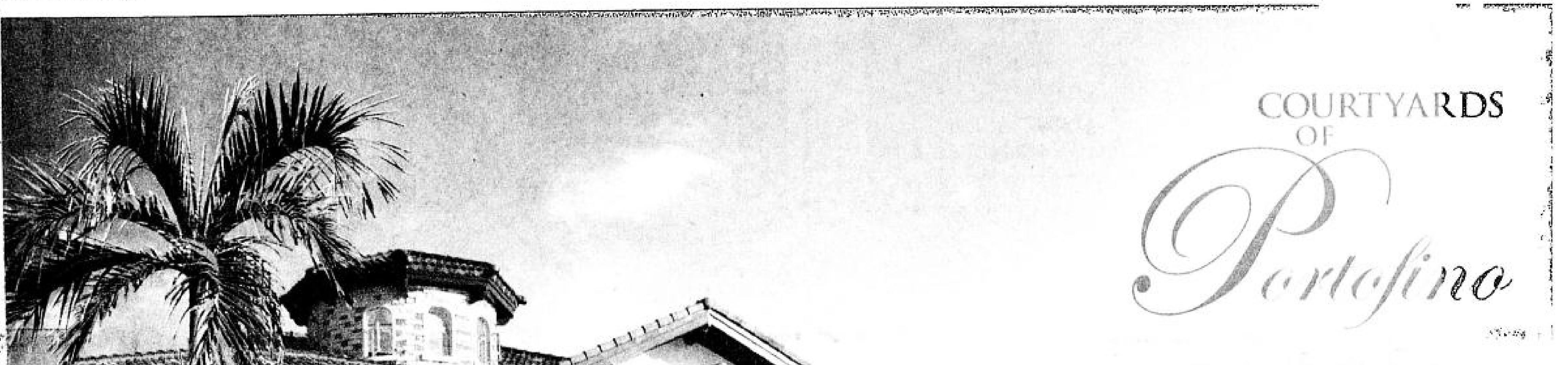
We can now see bold renditions of them in the form of graffiti and public art displaying staunch political advocacies, architectural and interior walls that defy reason and scale, surfaces that graduate from walls down to the ground we step on. Indeed, nothing is too sacred for self-expression. These magnificent illusions blur not only what seems unreal to the naked eye. The truth is, they unveil infinite possibilities of seeing, like looking through a kaleidoscope.

"What is life? An illusion, a shadow, a story. And the greatest good is little enough: for all life is a dream, and dreams themselves are only dreams."

—Pedro Calderon dela Barca



AT HOME with nature. Who says murals are for public consumption only? In this bedroom, the painted wall provides the great escape to the jungle.



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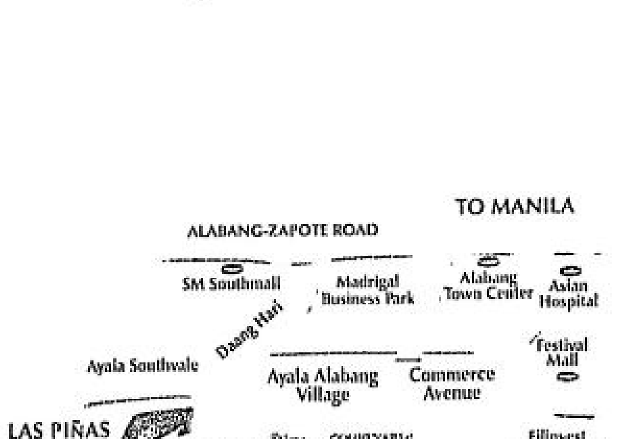

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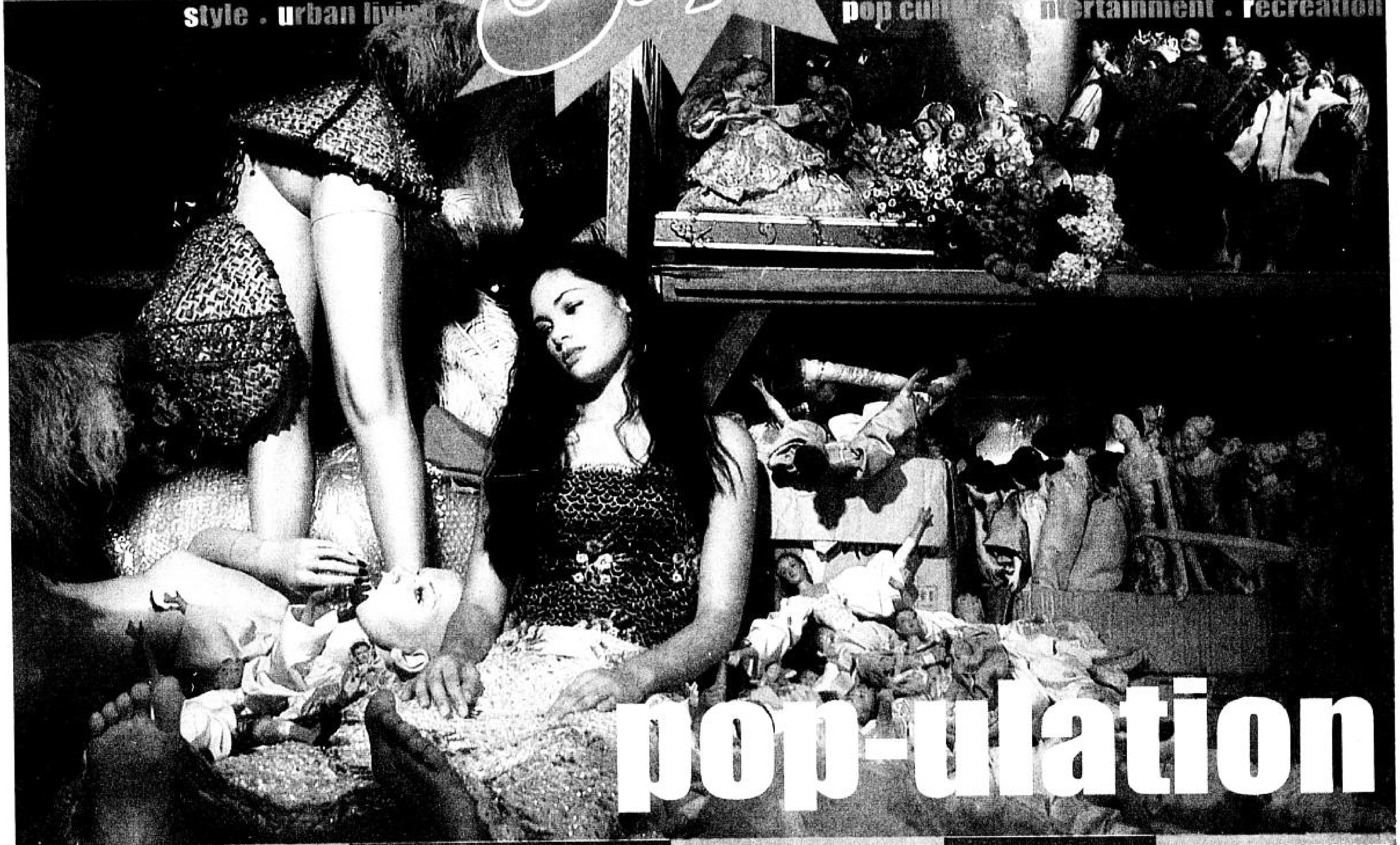

pop-ulation

Is everybody in this town a VIP? page D1

Who will make the VJ cut? page E1

Pepe &James watch 'Dreamboy' & 'Let the Love Begin' page G1

The city's new DJ Directory page G2

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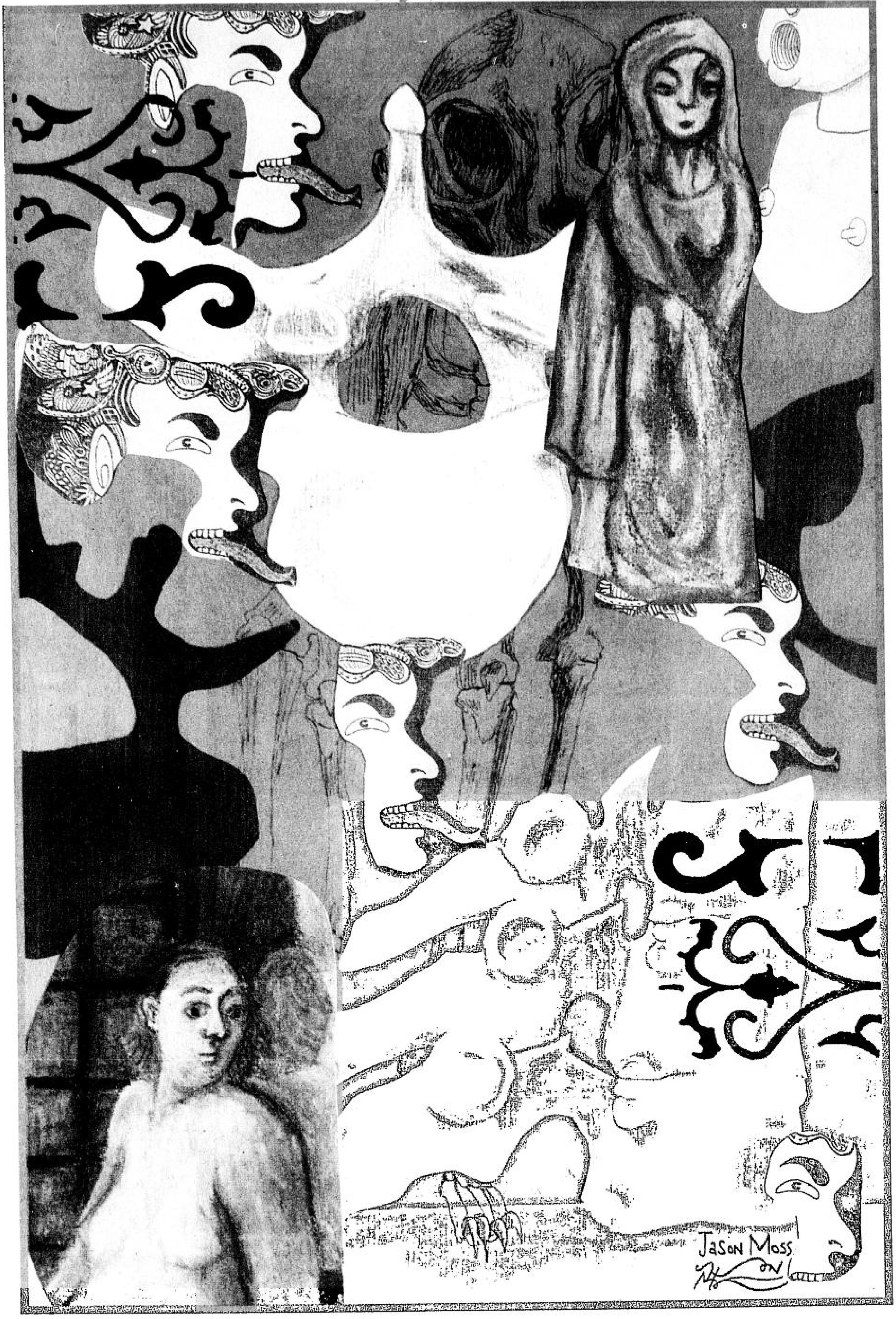

Cut the crop

In a crowd of self-declared next-big-things, how do you stand out?

By Pam Pastor
Original artwork by Jason Moss

> *Helen Parr: Everybody is special, Dash.*
> *Dash Parr: That's just another way of saying nobody is.*
>
> –The Incredibles

ALL IT took was a blue feather. While filming a documentary about the mating rituals of animals, the filmmakers attached a blue feather to a male bird. When he flew back to the tree, the she-birds flocked around him, clamoring for his attention and ignoring the rest of the males. One feather—that's all it took for him to stand out.

Unfortunately, in the real world, accessorizing is not enough.

This generation is made up of individuals who take pride in being unique. Everyone thinks they're different. And if everyone is different, then everyone's the same.

Weird has become normal. Unusual has become ordinary.

A gazillion people call themselves models. A gazillion people call themselves DJs. A gazillion people call themselves VJs. A gazillion people call themselves writers. A gazillion people call themselves stars. And there are gazillions more who are still climbing that ladder, gazillions more who are aspiring to be models, DJs, VJs, writers, stars.

The world has become overpopulated with self-declared next-big-things.

Oh yes, the dreaming never ends.

But when does the dreaming stop and the reality begin?

When you get noticed.

And how do you get noticed when everyone else is scrambling for attention? That's the gazillion dollar question.

Should you change your name? Should you make like Cher and drop your last name? Should you do the Jennifer/J. Lo/Jenny from the Block thing and change your name more often than you change spouses? Should you set aside your real one and opt for one that people can actually remember like the other Jennifer who changed her original Anastassakis to Aniston? That's totally up to you. We suggest that you forget about adapting famous Hollywood names though—look at what it did to Keanna Reeves' career.

Should you get tattoos and piercings? Maybe not. They're too 90s, they're over. Even your resident fishball vendor has them.

Should you sleep with the director or directors? The question is—which one?

Should you release your own sex video? It worked for Paris Hilton. It didn't work for Mahal. Will it work for you? Tip #1 - at least make sure that you look good naked. Tip #2 - drop the *tabo*.

Should you get a newspaper column? Just make sure it's in a paper that people actually read.

Should you create controversies? Beat someone up, crash your car, jump into a May-December relationship with ancient fortune tellers? Not if you want to hold on to your dignity.

Should you pretend you're straight? Ambiguity is the way to go. Your sexuality should be like your nose. It's just there—don't flaunt it, don't hide it.

Truthfully, there is no single route to success, no definite path for stardom.

People have achieved it countless times without even trying. Some were born into it, some just walk in the mall and are pulled into it.

But those who really make it have what it takes. Substance. Talent. Star power. Or at least really good agents.

Not everyone has to be a VJ, a DJ, a model, a writer or a star.

There must be something you're really good at. Maybe you execute the best cartwheels. Hit the highest notes. Write the most beautiful songs. Throw the best parties. Cook the yummiest spaghetti. Sew the greatest skirts. Throw the perfect shots. Come up with the funniest punchlines. Take the most amazing photos.

So forget the name change, forget the tattoos, forget the piercings and the sex videos. Stand by your sexuality, stay away from controversies and don't sleep with the director (unless you really want to).

Find your blue feather and draw the people in. But things shouldn't end there. Find out what you have that keeps them interested, that holds them captive. And when you do, unleash it, let it shine. That's how you make the final cut.

Superfriends

Text and photos by David Milan
Want to be on Superfriends? E-mail me at david_milan@lycos.com

Miko Manalo
My real age is: 20
I'm unique because of my: MESSY hair
My juiciest move is: The grin-ate
My most original expression is: Winking at everyone
E-mail me at: dude_miko@yahoo.com

Kisses Salvacruz
My real age is: 18
I'm unique because of my: Friends. We all blend in and at the same time, each one of us stands out
My juiciest move is: Oh! You should see me dance when I'm on... haha
My most original expression is: My ability to laugh and cry all at once
E-mail me at: chis_is_kisses@yahoo.com

Trina Soriano
My real age is: [illegible]
I'm unique because [illegible] to learn how to drive a pedicab [illegible]
My juiciest move is: The Egg [illegible]
My most original expression is: LOKA! [illegible]
E-mail me at: [illegible]@yahoo.com

Cristina Gomez
My real age is: 21
I'm unique because of my: View on life (too much of an optimist)
My most original move is: The facial swirl
My most unique expression is: Nyork!
E-mail me at: tetagomez@yahoo.com

Tamara Acena
My real age is: 17
I'm unique because of my: Tummy because it sounds like my name
My juiciest move is: Pinching the fat folds of my guy friends
My most original expression is: "Well, well, well... look do we have here!" [illegible]
E-mail me at: [illegible]@yahoo.com

Stevie del Rosario
My real age is: 21
I'm unique because of my: Music and creativity
My juiciest move is: Diving down a deep filthy creek just to save my runaway football
My most original expression is: "Let your mind flow free with the rhythm of the sea and don't like locked doors"
E-mail me at: thisisstevie@yahoo.com

DO SOME DAMAGE

Javier Coromina
My real age is: 20
I'm unique because of my: [illegible]
My juiciest move is: I can curl up my tongue and laugh frenchmade at you
My most original expression is: I can smile like a demon child
E-mail me at: jav_[illegible]@yahoo.com

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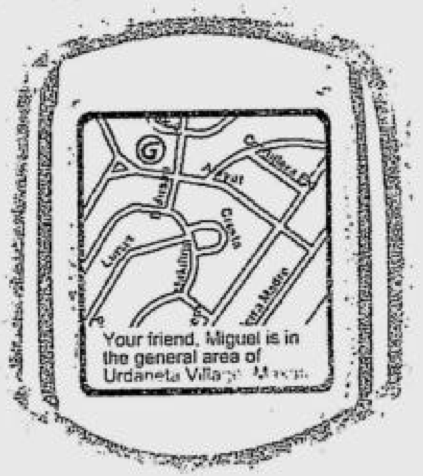
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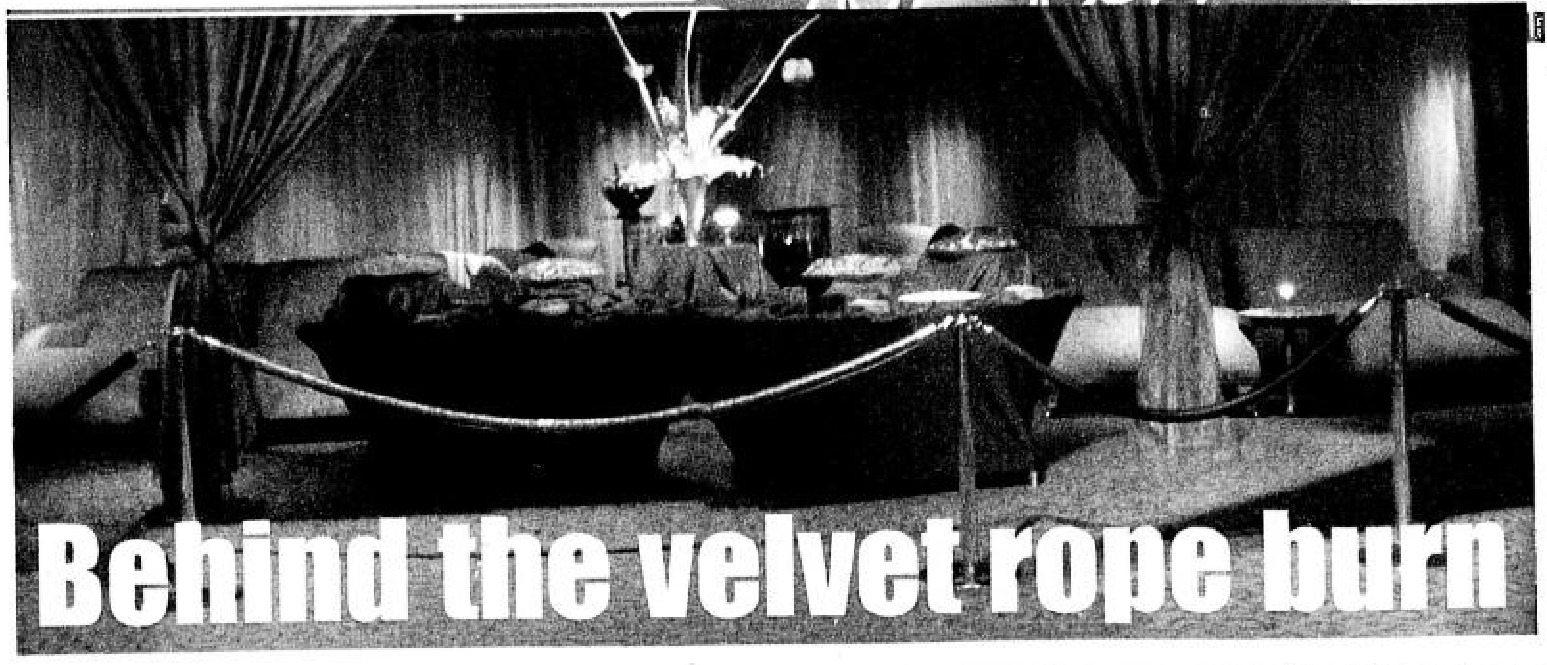

Behind the velvet rope burn

Who gets in the VIP lounge? Who doesn't? And why do people care so freakin' much anyway?

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ASK ANYONE who's ever lined up to enter a club: Hell hath no fury like a scorned partygoer. Trust me, I know. Sort of.

During my years as a nocturnal fly-on-the-wall, I've seen, heard and experienced enough dramedy while stepping into a club to talk about the subject with some degree of know-how. Or bullshit, depending on how you see things. (Honestly, there are certain episodes I'd rather forget but I'll disclose anyway, all for the sake of a riveting, if not libelous, read.) So yes, I'll continue this preface by running through the gauntlet of characters you'd typically find huddled outside any nightspot-of-the-second.

Age against the machine

Gino de la Paz

Then again, hold that thought.

It would be so much better if I focused instead on the people you'll *never* find huddled outside any nightspot-of-the-second. I'm talking, of course, about VIPs. Hoo-ha! Who the hell are these VIPs and how do they get past the doorman? Hang on. We'll get to them in a bit.

In the meantime, allow me to make this scenario even more vivid: It's Friday. Half-past midnight. Any club or bar with a reputation for raging parties. Fifty or so essentially optimistic kids wait behind the velvet rope. Some desperate ones complain on their cell phones about the impossible queues. (If it's in Manila, they'd also bitch about the heat. And maybe parking. And Manila. Do you have the attention span for this?) The rest are content to dump some cash at the receptionist's desk and finally get in the club.

Suddenly, in your hazy peripheral vision, you see the door staff unhook the clasp of the rope, letting an obscene number of models make a beeline to the VIP lounge. No waiting. No paying. No questions asked. And so, amidst the cursing, name-dropping and blowing of secondhand smoke, the door Nazi announces to the crowd, "You have to be on the guest list!" This makes normally levelheaded you shamelessly wonder, "Who did they have to sleep with to get on that list?" After a few seconds of Red Bull-and-vodka-fueled thought, however, you start to conjecture, "Who do *I* have to sleep with to get on that list?!" Ah, if only life were that simple.

See, in a town where an obsession with shortcuts overlaps with a fascination with popularity, the notion of getting on such a list makes for an interesting topic. (That and the Sex Bomb Dancers' appeal.) But carrying on, how does a club's velvet rope manage to incite such a gamut of emotions in usually sensible scenesters? More telling, why?

Learning the ropes

The velvet rope came about sometime in the late '50s, when supper clubs in New York City such as El Morocco and the Stork Club used it to let the public know what to expect inside: a formal dress code and a dinner bill amounting to two weeks' salary for ordinary Americans. It was simply a one-in-two chance back then; You could either afford it or you couldn't.

Velvet rope politics evolved in 1977, however, when Steve Rubell and Ian Schrager opened the doors to Studio 54. (Yes, the same one as the spectacularly bad Ryan Philippe-Neve Campbell movie.) This time, the rope wasn't used to ward off those who couldn't afford what was behind it. Rather, Studio 54 turned crossing the rope into a challenge to welcome party people who thought they were beautiful, fabulous or outrageous enough to enter the now-legendary establishment. For the first time in nightlife history, dancing the night away wasn't a class-conscious thing. At last, celebrities had the opportunity to mingle with bridge-and-tunnel people from Jersey, who, in turn, had the chance to mingle with the rich and famous on neutral, tux-free territory. Hooray!

But with the advent of the '80s came freshly-minted yuppies. And along with that came more clubs that people could hit. Somewhere in between was the subsequent demise of Studio 54. Hence, the idea of the velvet rope started to fray, blah blah blah; Institutions unexpectedly had to raise the stakes in the night-

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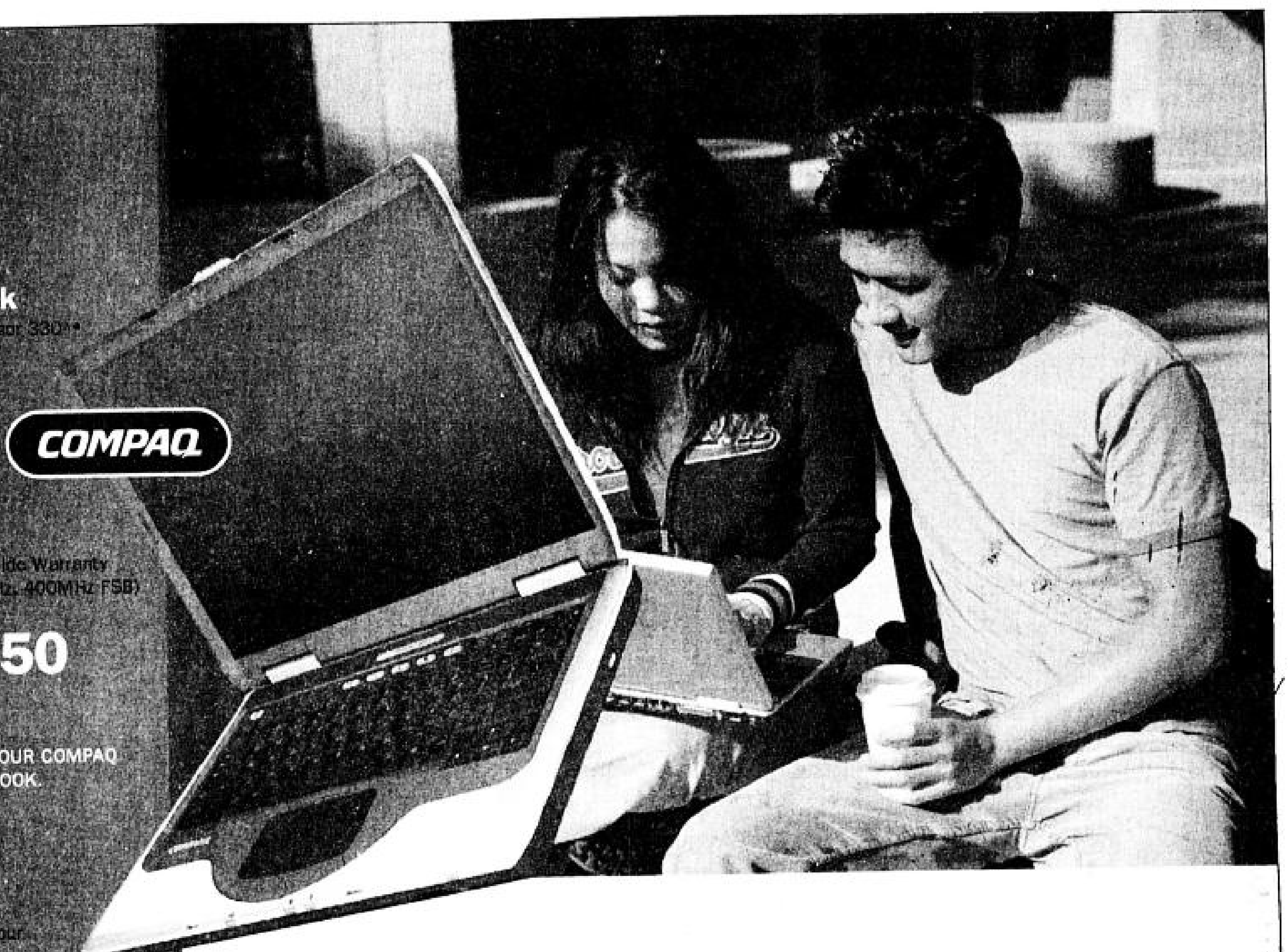

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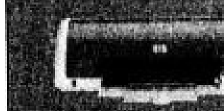

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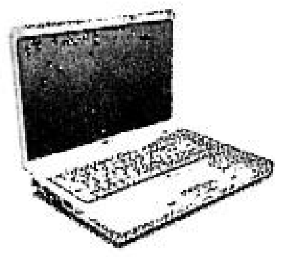

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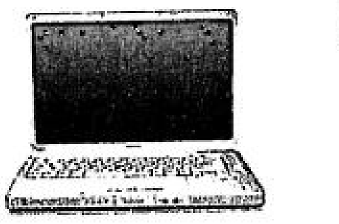

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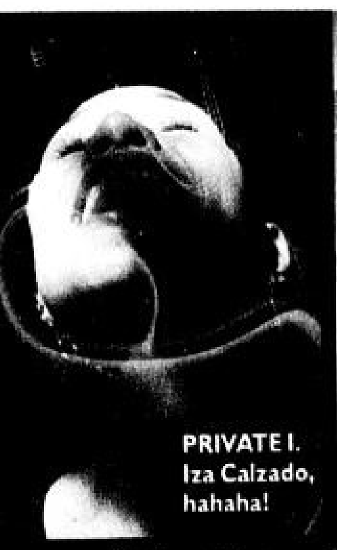
MULTIPLE OH. Ornusa Cadness' seductive stare



PRIVATE I. Iza Calzado, hahaha!

KISS KC! KC Montero at the Superclub

HIGH-SPIRITED Spencer Ty and Fran Ribaño

TIM YAP is the one

THIS CHICK IS A GOOD FIND. Jenni Epperson at Embassy's grand opening slash New Year's bash for the Rooster Year

KATRINA Lagman ready to rock

AVI SIWA is happily out

SUP, Jomari?

NEW YEAR, new hair for Borgy

caught by

andy Mache

www.dont-touch-my.com

DARA and Pam in party mode

MACKY who?

HAPPY Basement dwellers

HAPPY birthday, Liz Uy!

RATED Rene Costner

Do you have a Visa?

I just wanted to party a little without having to travel abroad. In order to get that "abroad" feeling, I went to the Embassy at the Fort.

I'm an alien according to the local immigration authorities and I can assure you that has nothing to do with my blue hair. I really do have an alien registration card but I digress. Back to partying.

We really did party seriously. I haven't seen so many celebrities in one heap [literally on top of each other. The place was packed—2,357 party people, to be exact].

WHAT: Grand opening of Embassy Superclub at the Fort and eve of the Year of the Cock.

WHERE: The Fort and its streets spilled with people, all wanting to get in. There was a line inside [to get in the VIP area, that is] and lines outside.

WHO: Wall-to-wall celebrities, some of whom were rejected from the VIP room. Gatecrashers namedropping at the door. Chicks seducing the doorman. "I'll buy four bottles of champagne, just let me in!" some bloke shouted at the bouncer. Cocky, cocky.

WHAT ELSE: Baby chicks were given out at the party's peak. Those who didn't want to squeeze into the packed Superclub just stayed inside the Cuisine side of Embassy. "Finally, a Superclub," was the collective whoop.

It's party time.

DREAMING OF EMBASSY. "So happy to be here..." Wednesdays is R&B night, Fridays is Musik Mambo Jumbo, Saturdays are house music!

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MULTIPLE OH. Ornusa Cadness' seductive stare

HIGHER SPIRITED Spencer Ty and Fran Ribaño

PRIVATE I. Iza Calzado, hahaha!

KISS KC! KC Montero at the Superclub

TIM YAP is the one

THIS **CHICK IS A GOOD FIND.** Jenni **Epperson at Embassy**'s grand opening **slash** New Year's bash for **the Rooster** Year

KATRINA Lagman ready to rock

[illegible] is happily out

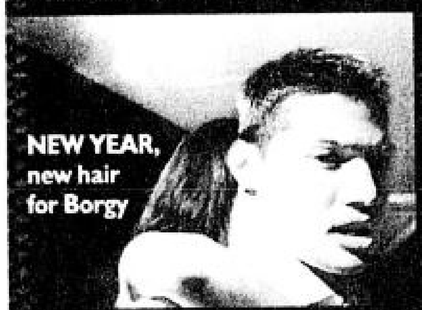
SUP, Jomari?

Do you have a Visa?

caught by

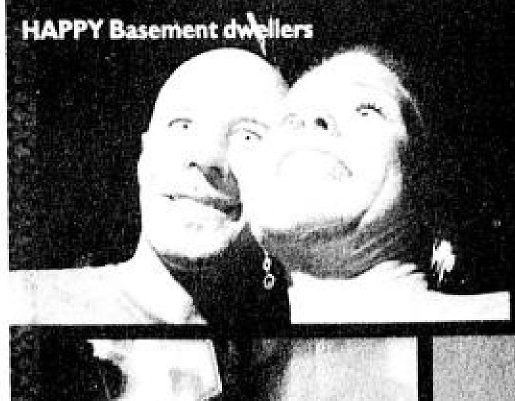
andy Mauche

www.dont-touch-my.com


NEW YEAR, new hair for Borgy

DARA and Pam in party mode

MACKY who?


HAPPY Basement dwellers

I just wanted to party a little without having to travel abroad. In order to get that "abroad" feeling, I went to the Embassy at the Fort.

I'm an alien according to the local immigration authorities and I can assure you that has nothing to do with my blue hair. I really do have an alien registration card but I digress. Back to partying.

We really did party seriously. I haven't seen so many celebrities in one heap (literally on top of each other. The place was packed—2,357 party people, to be exact).

WHAT: Grand opening of Embassy Superclub at the Fort and eve of the Year of the Cock.

WHERE: The Fort and its streets spilled with people, all wanting to get in. There was a line inside (to get in the VIP area, that is) and lines outside.

WHO: Wall-to-wall celebrities, some of whom were rejected from the VIP room. Gatecrashers namedropping at the door. Chicks seducing the doorman. "I'll buy four bottles of champagne, just let me in!" some bloke shouted at the bouncer. Cocky, cocky.

WHAT ELSE: Baby chicks were given out at the party's peak. Those who didn't want to squeeze into the packed Superclub just stayed inside the Cuisine side of Embassy. "Finally, a Superclub," was the collective whoop.

It's party time.

HAPPY birthday, Liz Uy!

RATED Rene Costner

DREAMING OF EMBASSY. "So happy to be here..." Wednesdays is R&B night, Fridays is Musik Mambo Jumbo, Saturdays are house music!

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MULTIPLE OH. Ornusa Cadness' seductive stare

PRIVATE I. Iza Calzado, hahaha!

KISS KC! KC Montero at the Superclub

HIGH-SPIRITED. Spencer Ty and Fran Ribaño

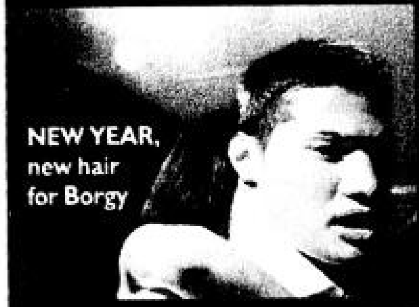
TIM YAP is the one

THIS CHICK IS A GOOD FIND. Jenni Epperson at Embassy's grand opening slash New Year's bash for the Rooster Year

KATRINA Lagman ready to rock

AVI SIWA is happily out

SUP, Jomari?



NEW YEAR, new hair for Borgy

caught by

andy Mache

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MACKY who?

ROOTS
SOUL
REBEL

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DREAMING OF EMBASSY. "So happy to be here..." Wednesdays is R&B night, Fridays is Musik Mambo Jumbo, Saturdays are house music!

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Behind the velvet . . .

From page D1

time game. And so it came to pass in 1995 that Manhattan's Spy Bar offered a new kind of snobbery: the VIP lounge.

The New Promised Land

Slightly obsolete, the velvet rope turned into a mere façade of selectiveness. Partying circa then advanced further from merely stepping into a club to stepping into a club's exclusive lounge. Consequently, door bitches and list hos also became increasingly aware of letting in faces other than those that belonged to the moneyed elite or wild nobodies who'd come to raise the roof. It was all about celebrity, peeps. Is anyone capable of such strength? Yeah, apparently. Which nicely brings me back to my point: Once again, who the hell are these VIPs and how do they get past the doorman?

Apart from celebrities, this enhanced velvet rope mentality now encompassed a new class of very important party guests: the people who work with and for celebrities—the managers, the magazine editors, the publicists, the connected. Connected to what, I hear you ask? The press, eventually, and anybody with vast decision-making and taste-shaping powers. The ones that make up this fresh kind of glamour are those most likely to be snapped by the paparazzi. High-profile creatures plus flashbulbs equals great photos equals even greater gossip. All in all, the mix was a totally profitable formula.

As bizarre as these current conventions may sound, a doorman from New York City's Bungalow 8 agrees that the people most likely to get in are "'Page Six' celebrities, people with good style, and socialites." (Bungalow 8 owner Amy Sacco is on first-name basis with such ubiquitous celebutantes as Paris and Nicky Hilton, Lauren Bush and Casey Johnson, she of the Johnson & Johnson empire.) On the other hand, the frontliners at LA's White Lotus say that if you try to get in with "hip-hop posses with gold chains and FUBU-forget it." Word.

Open Sesame, Or How to Detect Barbarians at the Gate

Personally, I've noticed that more and more people these days have a vaguely misguided sense of entitlement, especially when they demand to be ushered into a club's private area. Hate to break it to you, but it doesn't work that way.

Allison Melnick of Lot 61 in New York sees the same thing. "Everyone thinks they should be treated like VIPs," she observes. Is wanting to be "in" such a bad thing? Or is it a normal human condition? "People want to be accepted someplace where others were rejected, or to do things that others couldn't," says Herbert Gans, Ph.D., professor of sociology at Columbia University. "For some that means getting their book accepted by a prominent publisher. For others, getting into a club." For me, it's making fun of people who think they should be treated like VIPs. Humor can be a good buffer, you know, so say it with me—Hoo-ha!

If the velvet rope experience is indeed all about one-upmanship and being perceived as chic, is there a crib sheet to stepping into the bright lights that the lounge affords? When it comes to party circuit sociology, there's a world of difference between real important peeps and barbarians at the gate. So if you really must climb the dastardly rungs of that social ladder, here are a few things to remember—and some things to forget—when bringing your A-game to the door.

1 There are things you'll never hear from quote, unquote beautiful people.

Come hell, high water, or a brutal rejection by the burly dude at the VIP room, you should never ever utter the following:

a) Don't you know who I am?

b) Don't you know who I am... with?

Obviously, the fact that you were snubbed already answers those questions, rendering them rhetorical and you, a wack-ass wannabe. Crashers get a bum rap because of their misplaced arrogance. However, if you really insist, go ahead and pose said questions until you're all red-cheeked. The experience will be remarkably therapeutic—for the bouncer, that is—as it's sure to give him a head-clearing laugh, which is fundamental after a night of dealing with schmucks like you.

2 The bouncer doesn't care if you're Richie Rich.

Fine, you're not entering the club to nurse a token beer, but come on! As any veteran partyphile knows, bribing the doorman with money (or sexual favors) won't get you anywhere. Except where you originally were. Which, in this case, would still be anywhere *but* the VIP area. By the way, angry shrieks, violent chest-beatings and overall attempts at raising hell should still be avoided for everyone's sake.

Richie Rich

PRIVATE PARTY

3 If you try too hard, it will show.

Related to #2, veteran A-listers are also aware that showing your "worthiness" by declaring how much cash you intend to sink in the establishment is just plain tacky. Tacky, tacky, tacky.

Okay, I was in a newly-opened superclub when my friends—who normally talk about shoes—overheard a spurned party guest say, "I'll buy four bottles of champagne if you'll let me in!" Now, seeing as all drinks were on the house that night, that tough-guy remark made the abovementioned gatecrasher sound like a mock star instead of a rock star. Boo. Had the paparazzi been around to capture that moment, their pictures would've been slightly less than a thousand words, and, in fact, would've merited just one: Tacky.

4 Don't treat the VIP lounge like it's some sort of... *VIP lounge.*

Bumping. Grinding. Drinking. More bumping. Even if it's frequented by guys in Prada lace-ups, chicks who work in fashion magazines, non-indicted CEOs or by anyone you can imagine with a Siamese cat on his or her lap, reclining on a chaise eating chocolates, the VIP lounge can get jam-packed, too. By a bitchier crowd, at that. When that happens, the spacious main floor becomes more desirable. Because really, no one worth his or her crantini wants to resemble a duck being bred for pâté. And that's what it feels like during prime time in the lounge. So no matter how these insiders behave, they're no better than you. Remember: Lines outside, lines inside. (Wink, wink!) Where you are is your very own VIP area.

5 Every party has its pooper.

But if getting into the VIP lounge is really your mission in life, you're really in serious trouble because everywhere you go will seem like a VIP lounge that denies you access. (Sad, but review Rules #1-4.) If such is the case, I only have this to conclude about your scenester status: The party's over! It may be time for you to finally cut your losses, air-kiss that dream goodbye and go hang yourself...with a velvet rope.

BLINDFOLD G. The excitement of things unseen . . .

G FINALLY SPOTTED. G on an instant Freeway to marriage

G Tongi's wet shower!

HERE with would-be groom Tim Walters in Frederick Peralta

WHAT: G Tongi's bridal shower thrown by good friend Joey Mead. As we all know, G Tongi is getting married to Tim Walters. Their rehearsal was at the INQUIRER-sponsored bridal fair last month.

WHO: G's very, very close friends. Aside from Joey, there were Claudine Trillo-Webb, Dyan Castillejo, Celine Lopez, Christine San Diego, Alcs Porras, VP all gathered and played games to toast the soon-to-be Mrs. Walters.

WHERE: At Robby Carmona's bachelor's pad in Wack Wack

WHEN: Today—it's her wedding day at exclusive Boracay resort Nami where very select guests get to celebrate with Tim and Giselle as they toast to their new life together. Cheers! *Tim Yap*

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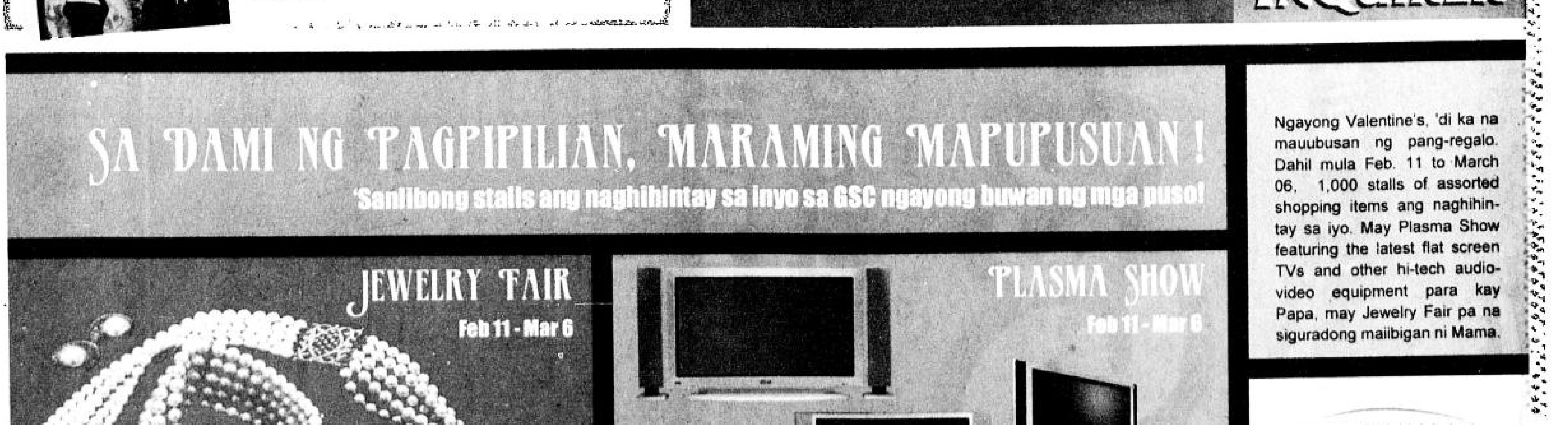
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Burn	Usher	BURN
Confessions	Usher	CONFESSIONS
My Boo	Usher feat. Alicia Keys	MYBOO
If I Ain't Got You	Usher feat. Alicia Keys	AINTGOTYOU
Simple Things	Usher	SIMPLETHINGS
Nice and Slow	Usher	NICENSLOW
You Make Me Wanna	Usher	MAKEMEWANA
My Way	Usher	MY WAY

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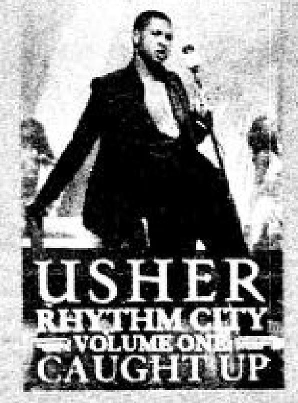

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Tim Yap

UBO AT TRANGKASO...
ISANG CAPSULE KA LANG!
TUSERAN FORTE
Walang kawala ang ubo at trangkaso sa bago at mas pinalakas na Tuseran Forte.

The thrill of the hunt

Photos by Jake Versoza

BRING out your shotguns, ladies and gentlemen. We are about to choose the next four guys and dolls who are going to hold the MTV emblazoned microphone beside **Sarah, KC, KC C., Cindy** and **Marc** (and the five other new VJs on the block).

Compared to the past years' crop of VJ wannabes, this bunch exudes a unique kind of flair—a variety of looks and personalities that range from an energizer bunny on steroids (**Srdjan Mendoza**, pronounced Serjan) to some chick who's even taller than KC and Sarah (**Gwen Ruais**)! There's also the brother of KC Montero (his name is **Colby Miller**) and the cousin of **Aubrey Miles** (Italian-American-Filipina beauty **Rashel Piazza**).

Then again, forget any signs of nepotism (**Don Puno** is related to **Dong Puno**, but of course!) or an abundance of growth genes (**Drew Wolff** is one big boy, **Nicole Fonacier** is one big girl—and proud of it)—these kids ALL have it. "We wanna have a VJ to represent every personality of our market," said **Ronan De Guzman**, one of the creative geniuses behind the multi-million dollar brand.

From the campuses of Ateneo (where **Claire Olivar** was picked) to the province of Iloilo (where **T Arceño** was chosen) to another MTV show (**Veronica Scott** was a finalist for MTV Supahstar)—the Ayos gang searched far and wide to come up with the final batch.

MTV grid

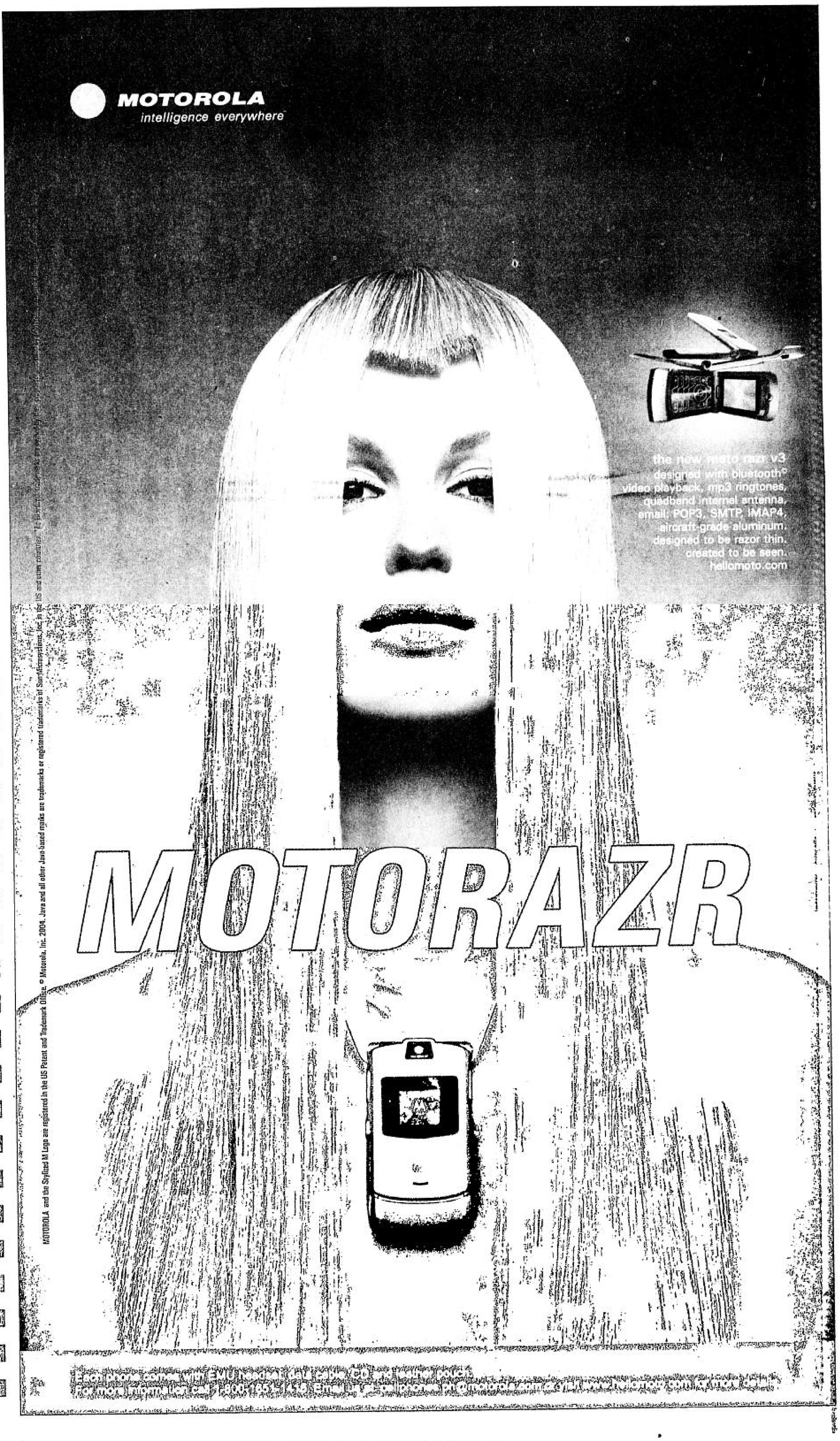
"Our guideline in choosing is that you can pick anyone from this group and they're equally qualified for the job," this coming from MTV main man **Jack Madrid**, who is sure to beef up the station's programming grid, thus the need for new VJs to ham it up for our viewing pleasure.

We overheard **Rica Peralejo** and **Juliana Palermo** also tried out to make the final cut for this year's crop. The show biz types who made it are **Chynna Ortaleza**, who's dying to break out of her "show biz shell," former host of 3R **Anna Domingo, Marv Luna**, a former Star Circle quest contestant, and Starstruck finalist **Christian Esteban**. The past years have seen some glitz biz denizens trying out as well. **Marc Nelson, Mo Twister, Greg Martin, Antoinette Taus** and **Chase Tinio** are just some of the names that have fallen out of the MTV short list.

Look-alikes are also aplenty. **Maggie Wilson** reminds one of KC Concepcion. **Jon Papworth** can be **Patrick Garcia's** brother. (He can also switch from English to Tagalog to Bisaya to Russian. Beat that.)

Lately the Magic 16 have been touring the whole gamut of MTV shows and making their presence felt. Who floats your VJ boat? Key in VJHUNT <space> <finalist's name> (eg. VJHUNT SARAH) and send to 688 for Smart and Addict Mobile subscribers. (Voting is until March 10, 2005)

Flip the page and see who among them gets to hog the screen. Ayos!



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MENDOZA

srdjan

People might be surprised to know that I won a chess tournament.
The worst thing that ever happened to me was when I was hit by a car while riding my bicycle when I was 8.
The secret to happiness is to have as much fun as you can along the way.
The soundtrack to my life would include the Friends soundtrack.
If I was invisible for a day, I would go around pranking my friends and maybe I'd drop by Angelina Jolie's home.
The thing that makes me most angry is heavy traffic when I'm in a rush.
When I'm gone, they'll probably say "Finally!"
The worst thing somebody said about me was I was too short to be taken seriously.
My favorite moments are when everyone around me is laughing.

WOLFF

drew

The thing about fame is that it can be both a blessing and a curse.
The thing I love most about what I do is I can crack jokes and do wacky things all the time.
People might be surprised to know that I play the violin.
The soundtrack to my life would include "Soul to Squeeze," "You Got it Bad," "Positivity," "Where do broken hearts go"
If I was invisible for a day, I would follow the people I love and see what they do when I'm not around.
The thing that makes me most angry is inconsiderate and insensitive people.
If money was no option I'd sent endless amounts of food to Africa and other poverty-stricken places. But I'll save some for my own kick-ass refrigerator-when I actually get one.
The world would be a much better place if each person found his or her soulmate.
My hero is anyone with passion.
The thing that makes my life worth living is friends, family, love.
I aspire to be blissfully happy.

LUNA

marv

People might be surprised to know that I'm great when it comes to astrology. What's your sign? :-)
I wish when I started off I've been told to suck it up.
The secret to happiness is to be content with what you have and never lose faith. You have to believe in something.
My best ever outfit consisted of a Barong and black slacks! I've only had the chance to wear that once in my life.
My Super! Saturday night consists of popcorn, movies, and a big bed.
If I was invisible for a day, I would haunt all the people without fear.
When I'm gone, they'll probably say "What happened to that tall guy who can beatbox?"
The thing that makes my life worth living is love, faith, memories, changes, and hot ladies with a lot to offer!
The worst thing somebody said about me was I was adopted.
My current state of mind is sober.

MILLER

colby

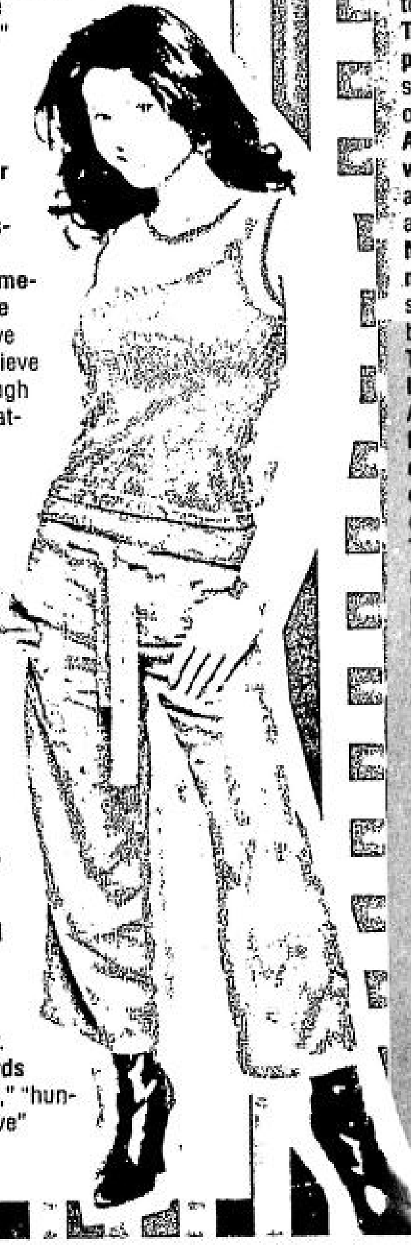
The thing about fame is that you lack privacy, but you live a life with benefits.
The thing I love most about what I do is I've got the freedom to be myself.
People might be surprised to know that I'm a good student.
My Super! Saturday night consists of Friends, BEER, food, BEER.
If I was invisible for a day, I would Rob a bank, naked.
The thing that makes me most angry is Stereotypical machismo guys who hang out in bars
If I was the most powerful person on earth I'd build a lunar motel, and another one by the sun.
When I'm gone, they'll probably say "He owed me 10 bucks!"
I'm saving up for anything. Right now I have nothing. Maybe socks and underwear?
If someone would play me in my biopic it would be Troy Montero—he's hot!
My 5 favorite words are Can I use phrases instead? "I'm buyin'," "Let's eat"—and "what," "ok," "yeah"

The thrill of the hunt

PIAZZA

rashel

My best ever outfit consisted of a pair of flip-flops, boxer shorts, and my old Escalona Elementary School T-shirt that was so worn-out but comfortable—my "house clothes!"
The soundtrack to my life would include "The Greatest Love of All" by Whitney Houston" and "Over the Rainbow" by Judy Garland.
If I was invisible for a day, I would investigate all my suspicions!
The worst thing somebody said about me was that I don't have what it takes to achieve good things, although these words motivated me more.
I'm saving up for an investment in my own business. I also want to support my mom.
My biggest indulgence islying down on a big comfy bed with a huge fluffy comforter.
My current state of mind is "Damn, I can't believe I'm a finalist!"
If someone would play me in my biopic, it would be Halle Berry, since I admire her.
My 5 favorite words are"really," "right," "hungry," "damn," "love"



RUAIS

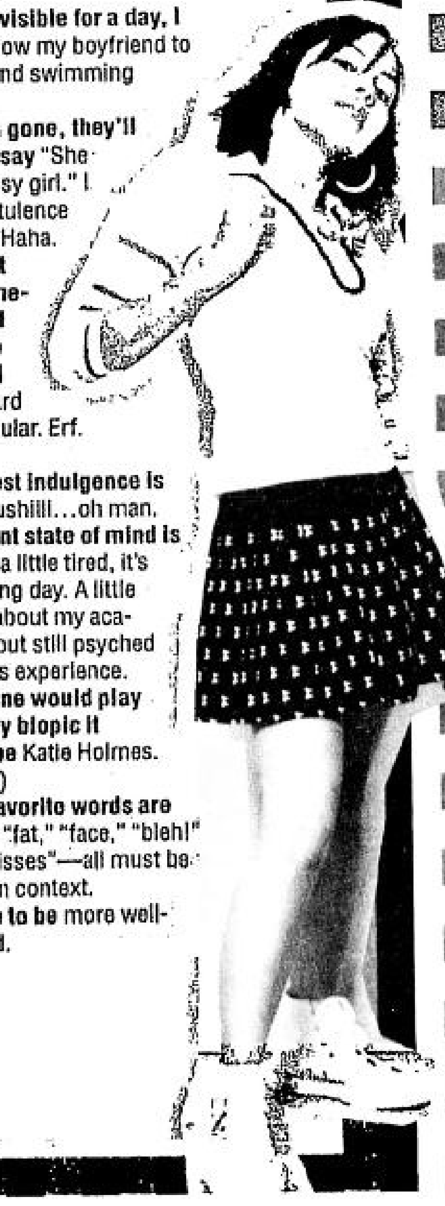
gwen

The thing about fame is that you can communicate and be heard by a wider range of people.
The thing I love most about what I do is is that it's a dream come true.
I wish when I started off I've been told to jump into it without fears.
The worst thing that ever happened to me was that my jet ski broke down in the middle of the ocean.
And what this taught me was don't jet ski when there are a lot of people around.
My Super! Saturday night consists of stargazing on the beach
The soundtrack to my life would include India Arie.
If I was invisible for a day, I would visit restricted areas of the Chateau de Versailles.
The world would be a much better place if people would follow Kant's philosophy.
My heroes are my parents and teachers.
The thing that makes my life worth living is my little brother.
The worst thing somebody said about me was I'm short.
My favorite moments are when I hang out at the beach with my best friends.
I'm saving up for a Cartier French Tank watch and a Mercedes Benz SLK
My 5 favorite words are "Oh my gosh no way"

OLIVAR

claire

The thing about fame is that it's intoxicating.
The worst thing that ever happened to me was when I moved to the Philippines from the States.
And what this taught me was the Philippines is REALLY GREAT after all. I was so wrong.
If I was invisible for a day, I would follow my boyfriend to the gym and swimming practice.
When I'm gone, they'll probably say "She was a gassy girl." I have a flatulence problem. Haha.
The worst thing somebody said about me was that I try too hard to be popular. Erf. :-(
My biggest indulgence is FOOD. Sushiiii…oh man.
My current state of mind is chill. I'm a little tired, it's been a long day. A little worried about my academics, but still psyched about this experience.
If someone would play me in my biopic it would be Katie Holmes. *Daw.* :-)
My 5 favorite words are "poo," "fat," "face," "bleh!" and "kisses"—all must be heard in context.
I aspire to be more well-rounded.



WILSON

maggie

People might be surprised to know that I'm only 15 but I'm already 5'8". Also that I lived in Saudi for 12 years.
I wish when I started off I've been told that I had to work 24/7.
The soundtrack to my life would include "That's the Way It Is" by Celine Dion, and "Fallen"
If I was invisible for a day, I would sneak into my crush's bedroom and go through his things!
When I retire, I would like to Live in a place like Boracay, and travel the world with my family.
The worst thing somebody said about me was that I looked older than my big sister. Aaargh! Hello, she's 25 and I'm 15!
My favorite moments are when I spend quality time with my family and good friends.
I'm saving up for a car and a house for my parents.
My biggest indulgence is shopping!
My currant state of mind is when opportunity knocks, grab it, and hit it.
My 5 favorite words are "yeah," "shucks," "really," "duh" and "my Lord!" (okay, that's two…)
I aspire to be an MTV VJ, an international ramp model, and a beauty queen.

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srdjan

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drew

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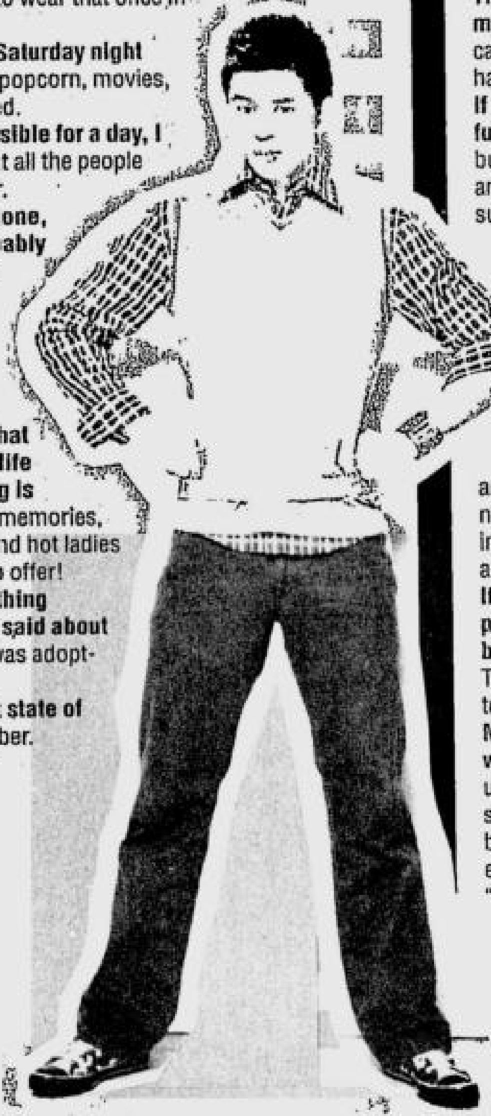
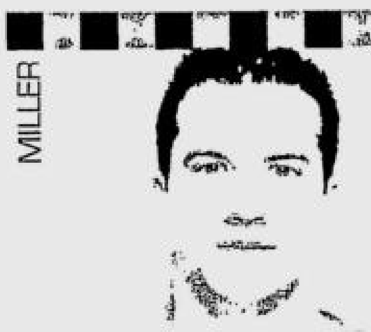
I aspire to be blissfully happy.

marv

People might be surprised to know that I'm great when it comes to astrology. What's your sign? :-)
I wish when I started off I've been told to suck it up.
The secret to happiness is to be content with what you have and never lose faith. You have to believe in something.
My best ever outfit consisted of a Barong and black slacks! I've only had the chance to wear that once in my life.
My Super! Saturday night consists of popcorn, movies, and a big bed.
If I was invisible for a day, I would haunt all the people without fear.
When I'm gone, they'll probably say "What happened to that tall guy who can beat-box?"
The thing that makes my life worth living is love, faith, memories, changes, and hot ladies with a lot to offer!
The worst thing somebody said about me was I was adopted.
My current state of mind is sober.





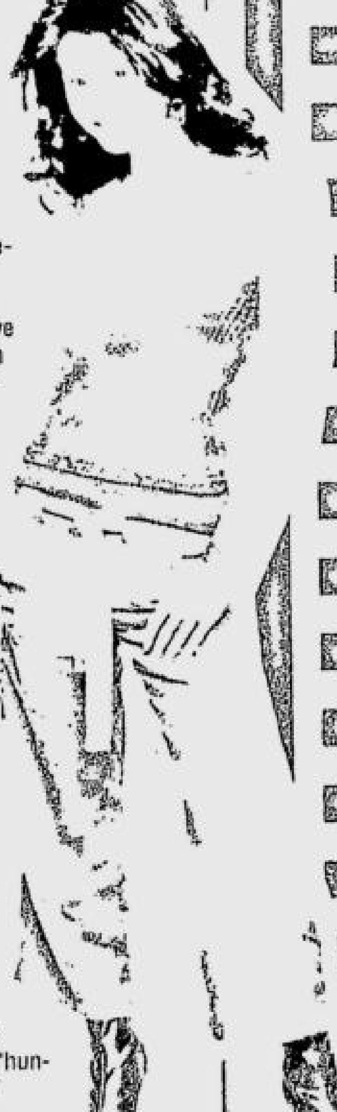
colby

The thing about fame is that you lack privacy, but you live a life with benefits.
The thing I love most about what I do is I've got the freedom to be myself.
People might be surprised to know that I'm a good student.
My Super! Saturday night consists of Friends, BEER, food, BEER.
If I was invisible for a day, I would Rob a bank, naked.
The thing that makes me most angry is Stereotypical machismo guys who hang out in bars
If I was the most powerful person on earth I'd build a lunar motel, and another one by the sun.
When I'm gone, they'll probably say "He owed me 10 bucks!"
I'm saving up for anything. Right now I have nothing. Maybe socks and underwear?
If someone would play me in my biopic it would be Troy Montero—he's hot!
My 5 favorite words are Can I use phrases instead? "I'm buyin'," "Let's eat"—and "what," "ok," "yeah"

The thrill of the hunt

rashel

My best ever outfit consisted of a pair of flip-flops, boxer shorts, and my old Escalona Elementary School T-shirt that was so worn-out but comfortable—my "house clothes!"
The soundtrack to my life would include "The Greatest Love of All" by Whitney Houston" and "Over the Rainbow" by Judy Garland.
If I was invisible for a day, I would investigate all my suspicions!
The worst thing somebody said about me was that I don't have what it takes to achieve good things, although these words motivated me more.
I'm saving up for an investment in my own business. I also want to support my mom.
My biggest indulgence islying down on a big comfy bed with a huge fluffy comforter.
My current state of mind is "Damn, I can't believe I'm a finalist!"
If someone would play me in my biopic, it would be Halle Berry, since I admire her.
My 5 favorite words are"really," "right," "hungry," "damn," "love"



gwen

The thing about fame is that you can communicate and be heard by a wider range of people.
The thing I love most about what I do is is that it's a dream come true.
I wish when I started off I've been told to jump into it without fears.
The worst thing that ever happened to me was that my jet ski broke down in the middle of the ocean.
And what this taught me was don't jet ski when there are a lot of people around.
My Super! Saturday night consists of stargazing on the beach
The soundtrack to my life would include India Arie.
If I was invisible for a day, I would visit restricted areas of the Chateau de Versailles.
The world would be a much better place if people would follow Kant's philosophy.
My heroes are my parents and teachers.
The thing that makes my life worth living is my little brother.
The worst thing somebody said about me was I'm short.
My favorite moments are when I hang out at the beach with my best friends.
I'm saving up for a Cartier French Tank watch and a Mercedes Benz SLK
My 5 favorite words are "Oh my gosh no way"

claire

The thing about fame is that it's intoxicating.
The worst thing that ever happened to me was when I moved to the Philippines from the States.
And what this taught me was the Philippines is REALLY GREAT after all. I was so wrong.
If I was invisible for a day, I would follow my boyfriend to the gym and swimming practice.
When I'm gone, they'll probably say "She was a gassy girl." I have a flatulence problem. Haha.
The worst thing somebody said about me was that I try too hard to be popular. Erf. :-(
My biggest indulgence is FOOD. Sushiiii...oh man.
My current state of mind is chill. I'm a little tired, it's been a long day. A little worried about my academics, but still psyched about this experience.
If someone would play me in my biopic it would be Katie Holmes. *Daw.* :-)
My 5 favorite words are "poo," "fat," "face," "bleh!" and "kisses"—all must be heard in context.
I aspire to be more well-rounded.

maggie

People might be surprised to know that I'm only 15 but I'm already 5'8". Also that I lived in Saudi for 12 years.
I wish when I started off I've been told that I had to work 24/7.
The soundtrack to my life would include "That's the Way It Is" by Celine Dion, and "Fallen'"
If I was invisible for a day, I would sneak into my crush's bedroom and go through his things!
When I retire, I would like to Live in a place like Boracay, and travel the world with my family.
The worst thing somebody said about me was that I looked older than my big sister. Aaargh! Hello, she's 25 and I'm 15!
My favorite moments are when I spend quality time with my family and good friends.
I'm saving up for a car and a house for my parents.
My biggest indulgence is shopping!
My current state of mind is when opportunity knocks, grab it, and hit it.
My 5 favorite words are "yeah," "shucks," "really," "duh" and "my Lord!" (okay, that's two...)
I aspire to be an MTV VJ, an international ramp model, and a beauty queen.

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PUNO

don

The thing about fame is that it's fleeting. Don't let it go to your head.
People might be surprised to know that I've attended 15 different schools and have moved homes over 20 times.
The worst thing that ever happened to me was My dog, Holly, died tragically.
If I was invisible for a day, I would run around naked and for the first time, let it all hang out.
The thing that makes me most angry is people who put others down to make themselves feel better.
When I'm gone, they'll probably say "What's that smell?"
The world would be a much better place if Everyone could eat whatever they wanted and not gain weight.
I'm saving up for a car.
My biggest indulgence is Pineapple chicken.
My current state of mind is analytical.
If someone would play me in my biopic it would be My brother.
I aspire to be successful.

PAPWORTH

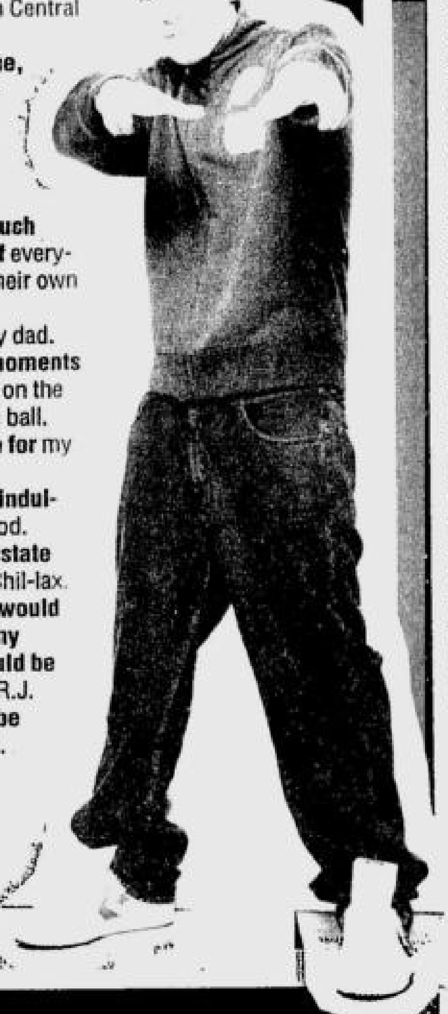
jon

The thing about fame is that you have the power to influence people but you have to make sure that you do it in a positive way.
The thing I love most about what I do is I always meet new people.
I wish when I started off I've been told to deal with problems quickly. People who you're at odds with are more likely to still remain friends if you sort out your issues straight away.
The worst thing that ever happened to me was I tripped on stage in front of the whole school.
And what this taught me was don't try and do the jiggy walk in front of the whole school.
The soundtrack to my life would include Usher, Jay-Z, Mario
If I was invisible for a day, I would Spy on my girlfriend.
If I was the most powerful person on earth I would send a lot of money to Africa.
If money was no option I would party non-stop but I would send money to Africa as well.
My hero is my dad.
The worst thing somebody said about me was I had a hole in my shirt.
My biggest indulgence is ice cream
My current state of mind is "OMG! How did I get on MTV?"
If someone would play me in my biopic it would be Adam Sandler.

ARCEÑO

t

The thing about fame is that you're known by everyone, but you're under a microscope all the time and you get no privacy.
I wish when I started off I've been told to let it all hang out.
The worst thing that ever happened to me was I didn't get drafted in the PBA draft.
My Super! Saturday night consists of wherever the party's at.
If I was invisible for a day, I would run naked through Central Park
When I'm gone, they'll probably say "This party sucks!" Haha
The world would be a much better place if everyone minded their own business.
My hero is my dad.
My favorite moments are when I'm on the court, playing ball.
I'm saving up for my retirement.
My biggest indulgence is food.
My current state of mind is Chil-lax.
If someone would play me in my biopic it would be my brother, R.J.
I aspire to be successful.



ESTEBAN

christian

The thing about fame is that I think it is something that is harder than it seems...and hmmm...it rhymes with candy cane, sugar cane, and hmmm...is there a salt cane? *Hehe.*
I wish when I started off I've been told to always stretch before I sleep so I could at least be 5'10" or a height where I don't have to jump to give a high-five to KC.
My best ever outfit consisted of a Captain Barbell costume with a Prince (as in, The Artist Formerly Known as Prince) wig and a headband over it. On a regular day though, I just like wearing Converse Chucks with jeans and a plain, solid-colored t-shirt.
If I was the most powerful person on earth I would create my own gym the size of Disneyland and collect all the WWF Wrestlers and then have them train me so that I'd be more powerful.

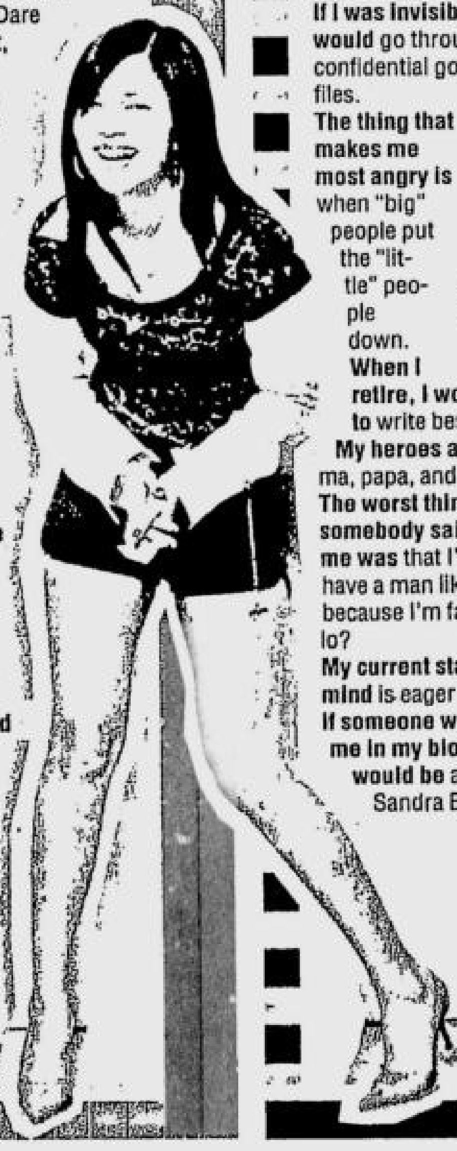
This bunch exudes a unique kind of flair—from energizer bunnies, campus [illegible]

Hair and Makeup by: Prive II Salon
Clothes and shoes from: Converse and Esprit, U2, and [illegible]

ORTALEZA

chynna

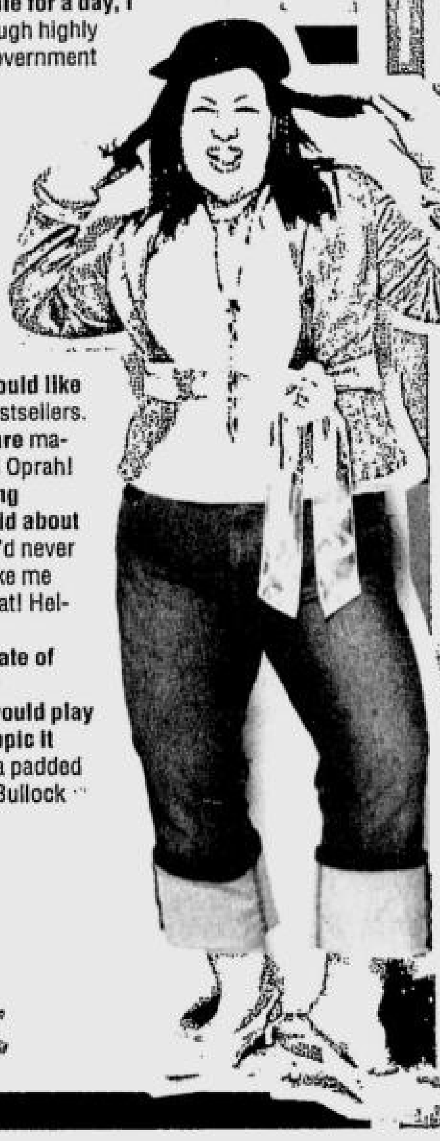
The thing about fame is that it has to be taken in stride
People might be surprised to know that I still get nervous when I go on camera
The worst thing that ever happened to me was when I felt claustrophobic in 30 ft of water.
And what this taught me was there are fears one must conquer.
The soundtrack to my life would include "Drive" by Incubus, "Dare You to Move" by Switchfoot, "Rain" by Madonna
If money was no option I would fund a camp for the arts to keep people away from vices.
My hero Isanyone who is original and distinct.
The thing that makes my life worth living is love and pain.
The worst thing somebody said about me was that I met an accident and died.
My favorite moments are when my family gets together.
My biggest indulgence is makeup and CDs
My current state of mind is to expect the unexpected and enjoy life's surprises.
If someone would play me in my biopic it would be Zhang Ziyi
My 5 favorite words are "love," "peace," "joy," "sorry," and "why"



FONACIER

nicole

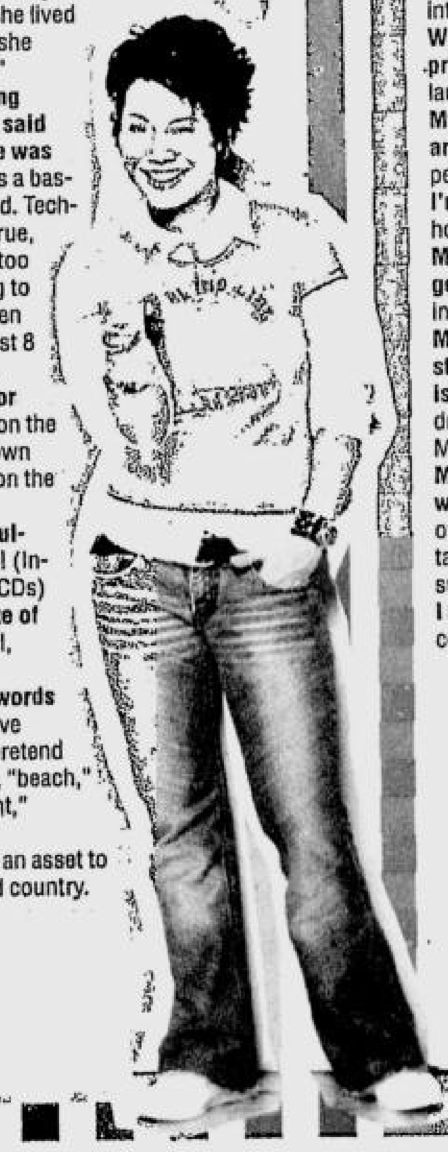
The thing I love most about what I do is that I get to hang out with 1,200 different characters whenever I feel like it.
People might be surprised to know that I've recently lost 40 lbs (at the current state I'm in now). And I'm a kiddie party host!
The soundtrack to my life would include a Norah Jones' version of "Someone to Watch Over Me"
If I was invisible for a day, I would go through highly confidential government files.
The thing that makes me most angry is when "big" people put the "little" people down.
When I retire, I would like to write bestsellers.
My heroes are mama, papa, and Oprah!
The worst thing somebody said about me was that I'd never have a man like me because I'm fat! Hello?
My current state of mind is eager
If someone would play me in my biopic it would be a padded Sandra Bullock



DOMINGO

anna

The worst thing that ever happened to me was that I had to dance to the song "Mr. Disco" on a prime time TV show in electric pink and yellow earrings
The soundtrack to my life would include "Strong" by Robbie Williams, and the first Alanis Morrisette album
If I was invisible for a day, I would See what Quentin Tarantino was doing.
When I'm gone, they'll probably say "She lived with passion… she lived with color."
The worst thing somebody said about me was that I was a bastard-child. Technically true, but not too pleasing to hear when you're just 8 years old.
I'm saving up for my own house on the beach and my own therapy center on the beach.
My biggest indulgence is music! (Instruments and CDs)
My current state of mind is tranquil, steady
My 5 favorite words are "party," "live bands" (let's pretend that's 1 word), "beach," "empowerment," "knowledge"
I aspire to be an asset to my family and country.



SCOTT

veronica

People might be surprised to know that I love to make people laugh even if I'm not good at it.
The worst thing that ever happened to me was that I let myself be stressed out at a shoot.
The soundtrack to my life would include Cyndi Lauper, Gwen Stefani, Ludacris, and The Neptunes
If I was invisible for a day, I would go into a boys' locker room!
When I'm gone, they'll probably say "That girl laughs too much."
My favorite moments are when I make other people happy.
I'm saving up for a house for my mom.
My biggest indulgence is laughing!
My current state of mind is fixed on my drive to be an MTV VJ
My 5 favorite words are seriously, advantage, inspiration, success, focusing
I aspire to be successful

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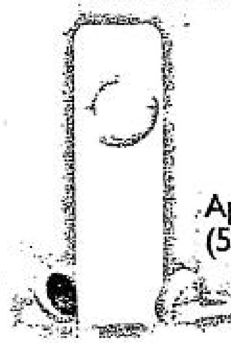

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Fly Me To The Moon	WL4
When I Fall In Love	WL5
I Left My Heart In San Francisco	WL6
Let There Be Love	WL7
Summer Wind	WL8
Clementine	WL9
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DIGITAL ARTWORK BY MARTIN VALDES

You had me at 'Hell, no!'

Man about town

Chuck Dy

Dear Man About Town,

I am a 24-year-old heterosexual male who lives in Metro Manila. I think I am pretty good looking (at least my ex-relationships have told me so), and I have been told that I have a great personality. I consider myself intelligent and funny, and I have had a steady job ever since I graduated from college.

The reason I am telling you all this is because—at the risk of sounding immodest—I think I stand a fairly good chance of successfully courting a girl when I put my mind to it. In the past, I have never had much of a problem with women. But for some reason, there is this one girl whom I have been trying to court for several months now, but she just keeps on rejecting me!

To be honest, she's not half as attractive as my other girlfriends, so my friends tell me to just give it up and look for someone more my "standard." But the more she rejects me, the more I want her! Is this just some "conquest" thing?

AH, WHAT bittersweet memories accumulate in the sieve of my mind when I recall my first haphazard attempts at romance, like slushy chunks of residue coffee grounds abandoned by their juices, waiting to be discarded, embraced only by the diaphanous filter of nostalgia.

At the tender age of five: a classmate with curly hair, dimpled cheeks and no idea, relocated to a school on another continent, taking my young heart with her.

At thirteen: an Assumptionista with a penchant for doling out soft glances and stiff poetry, my Sylvia Plaid, destroyed me after ninety-three nights of after-dinner phone calls, by informing me that she had a new boyfriend who drove a moped.

At twenty-four: a German fraulein blitzkrieged my first intercontinental romance by admitting that she had a fiancée back in Berlin. Hope they put the wall back up, you crazy Kraut!

Many more rejections have followed and many more are sure to come, but being romantically rebuffed is like having your teeth pulled by a dentist—the first three really hurt, and after that it's just a swollen numbness, lots of spitting, and fits of incongruous giggling.

> The more she rejects me, the more I want her

I really enjoyed reading your letter, by the way, particularly your attempt to salvage a modicum of self-respect by enumerating your selling points. Good-looking, great personality, intelligent, funny, responsible enough to maintain consistent employment, AND heterosexual! Abashet! If only I was a good-looking, affable, intelligent, funny, currently employed homosexual, we'd be perfect!

Just not into you

In a celebrated episode of Sex and the City, Miranda, upon inquiring as to the thought-process behind a man who wasn't calling her, is bluntly offered the suggestion that, maybe, "he's just not that into you."

There are millions of reasons why people do NOT find each other attractive, and that phrase recapitulates these raw, savage flaws into a expedient, less acerbic synopsis. Lack of physical attraction, unsuitable ideology, unacceptable personal hygiene, halitosis, friends are bitches, family reputation is unsavory, quotes from The Alchemist, socially inept, sexually inadequate, farts during funerals, drools, sports connecting eyebrows, refuses to read books without pictures, or has seen Titanic more than once. Whatever the specific toxin in the waters of a potential romance, "she's just not that into you" summarizes them all into one convenient container labeled "Poison."

Simple truth is, no matter how good your resumé looks on paper, sometimes you still won't get the job. People are attracted to each other for the most inane of reasons; axiomatically, they are occasionally repulsed by factors beyond obvious identification.

It is possible that you have estimated yourself quite accurately, gauging your market value according to an objective review of your looks, personality, and what you have to offer in a relationship. Then again, maybe you've been spending too much time basking in your mother's praise—and we all know how imprecise maternal opinion can be. My mother thinks I walk on water (which I do, mom, which I do).

You could attempt the direct approach and simply ask the object of your frustrated affection, but…

Do you really want to know why she's not into you? Are you man enough to sit across the table from a woman and listen to her enumerate your character flaws? I once made that mistake and asked a girl why she couldn't reciprocate my love. She informed me that I smelled of soil. Abashet! Brutal honesty has a way of haunting your self-esteem for the rest of your life.

Illusion of an ego

I say NAY, man! Cut your losses and run! At least you leave with the illusion of dignity and an ego, albeit a little bruised, that can still restore itself with comforting clichés and alibis, blaming everything from her sanity to a sign from God that you were meant for someone better, someone six-foot-two, with a body like Bombay curry on a summer afternoon, and about to inherit Palawan. Someone who appreciates the scent of soil, damn it!

Of course, we have not yet discussed the fascinating concept of The Unattainable. Ever since primitive man looked up at the

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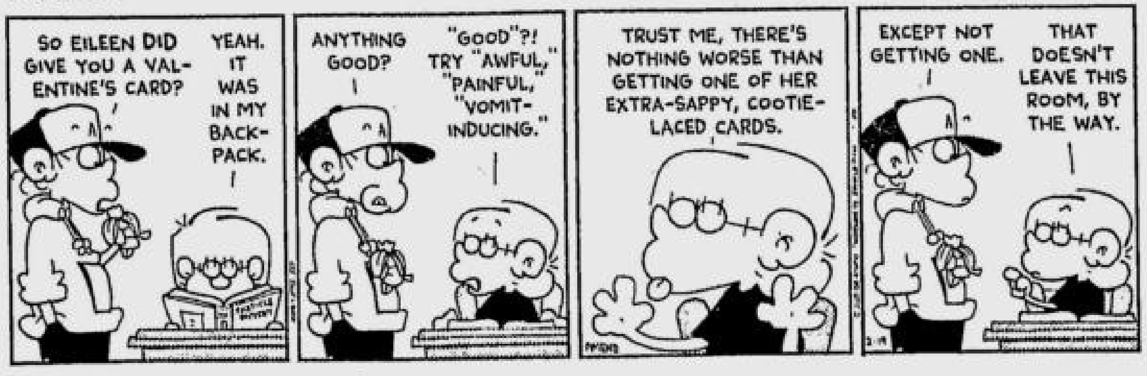
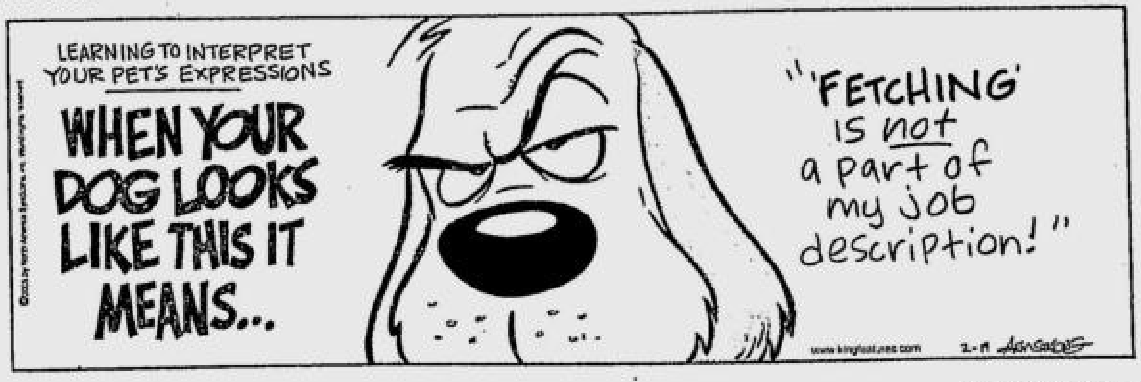
BY BILL AMEND


SO EILEEN DID GIVE YOU A VALENTINE'S CARD?
YEAH. IT WAS IN MY BACKPACK.
ANYTHING GOOD?
"GOOD"?! TRY "AWFUL," "PAINFUL," "VOMIT-INDUCING."
TRUST ME, THERE'S NOTHING WORSE THAN GETTING ONE OF HER EXTRA-SAPPY, COOTIE-LACED CARDS.
EXCEPT NOT GETTING ONE.
THAT DOESN'T LEAVE THIS ROOM, BY THE WAY.

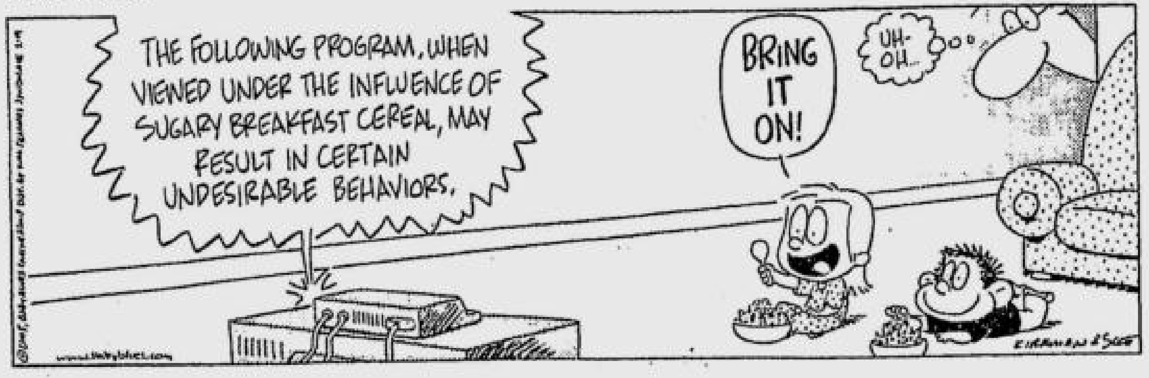
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


LEARNING TO INTERPRET YOUR PET'S EXPRESSIONS
WHEN YOUR DOG LOOKS LIKE THIS IT MEANS...
"'FETCHING' IS not a part of my job description!"
www.kingfeatures.com
2-19

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


THE FOLLOWING PROGRAM, WHEN VIEWED UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF SUGARY BREAKFAST CEREAL, MAY RESULT IN CERTAIN UNDESIRABLE BEHAVIORS.
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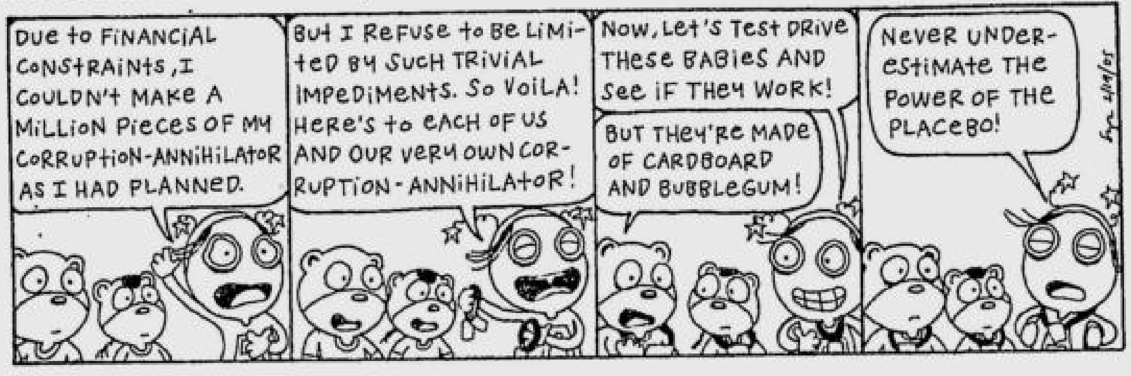
BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Due to FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS, I COULDN'T MAKE A MILLION PIECES OF MY CORRUPTION-ANNIHILATOR AS I HAD PLANNED.
But I REFUSE to BE LIMITED BY SUCH TRIVIAL IMPEDIMENTS. So VOILA! HERE'S to EACH OF US AND OUR VERY OWN CORRUPTION-ANNIHILATOR!
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BUT THEY'RE MADE OF CARDBOARD AND BUBBLEGUM!
NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE POWER OF THE PLACEBO!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You want commitment from others, but it can also make you nervous. You're determined and independent. You thrive professionally on your own, perhaps self-employed. You love your family, and they you. You have the mind of a scientist and an artist. The year ahead is full of exciting, new beginnings. It's an entirely new cycle for you.

Birthdate of: Smokey Robinson, singer; Benicio del Toro, actor; Seal, singer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Your intuition is extremely keen today. You can practically read the minds of others. Don't be surprised if unusual thoughts or ideas occur to you.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You're full of unorthodox, out-of-the-box ideas! Is someone unusual and perhaps influencing you now? Whatever the source, you're looking at life in a whole new way.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Don't jump to conclusions if your boss says something today. Make sure you heard correctly. It's very easy to jump the gun today. (Your mind is nervous.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Political or religious discussions with others could be argumentative. You think your ideas will reform things. Others might not agree. It's a clash of wills in an invigorating way.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You have surprising insights into how others think today. You see that how they view the world is different from the way you view it. This can help you be more tolerant and understanding of others.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Someone seems to be a bit rebellious or defiant today. Can you handle it? Your best option is not to "handle" anything. Just let others do their own thing.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): New technology at work makes a big difference now. You might still be on your learning curve, however. A conversation with a co-worker is exciting. (Juicy gossip, perhaps?)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You're full of wild, out-of-the-box, creative ideas today. You have almost geniuslike thoughts right now. Do anything creative. Try new teaching techniques with children.

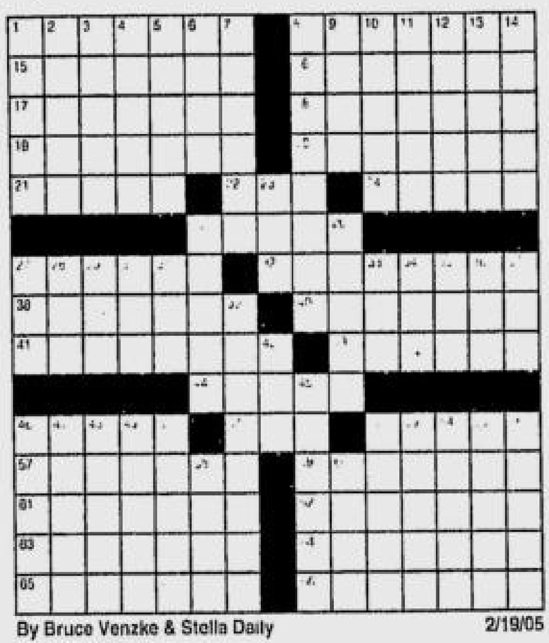
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Conversations with family members are definitely surprising today. People feel independent. They will not be coerced. You have to respect the opinions of others.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Today is a great day for any kind of mental work that requires originality and cleverness. Your mind is teeming with bright ideas!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Impulse buying tempts you today. You feel unusually spontaneous about everything to do with money. In a way, you're a bit restless and devil-may-care with your cash.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Your pace of thinking is so fast that you can hardly handle it today. Your mind races from idea to idea in an instant. Puzzles and mysteries fascinate you now.

DAILY CROSSWORD

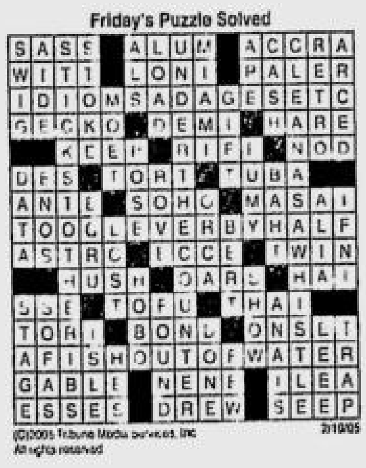


By Bruce Venzke & Stella Daily
Madison, WI
2/19/05

ACROSS
1 Drool
8 Rifts
15 Protuberance on the skin
16 Ptolemy or Ramses
17 Win the long jump
18 Decorations of office
19 Artful paper-folding
20 Of love
21 Surface of a gem
22 Vote against
24 Magritte and Descartes
25 Choreographer Cunningham
27 Jonestown location
32 Hingis and Navratilova
38 Conceit
40 Capital of Kenya
41 Wordless approval
43 Usher
44 Wed out of state
46 Radiating warmth
51 Hive resident
52 Bone cavity
57 Platitude
59 Spread thickly
61 Alpine crooner
62 Rich ice cream
63 Tracy of "Boys Town"
64 Swiss lake
65 Perceptual
66 Timeless

DOWN
1 Amiable satire
2 Designer Ashley
3 Of the eyes
4 Tommyrot!
5 Lamb's lament
6 Oater actor Jack
7 Pillage
8 Graffiti artist's applicator
9 Sci. branch
10 Horrible guy?
11 Furious
12 Beauty spot?
13 Watered fabric
14 Old-fashioned open carriages
23 Upper limb
25 Billiards shot
26 Backspace
27 Understand
28 Yuck!
29 Face in the mirror
30 Place to get PIN money
31 Whippoorwill bill
33 Dead heat
34 Personal pension $
35 __ for profit
36 Lincoln's nickname
37 Galahad's title
39 Dark grayish purple
42 Poet Edgar Allan
45 Tool for grinding
46 Bottomless chasm
47 Feel one's way
48 Waterproof wool cloth
49 Prophetic signs
50 Roger's response?
52 Broad comedy
53 Web-footed mammal
54 De-fleeced?
55 Medicinal bush
56 Sharon of Israel
58 Source of venison
60 Clumsy oaf

Friday's Puzzle Solved



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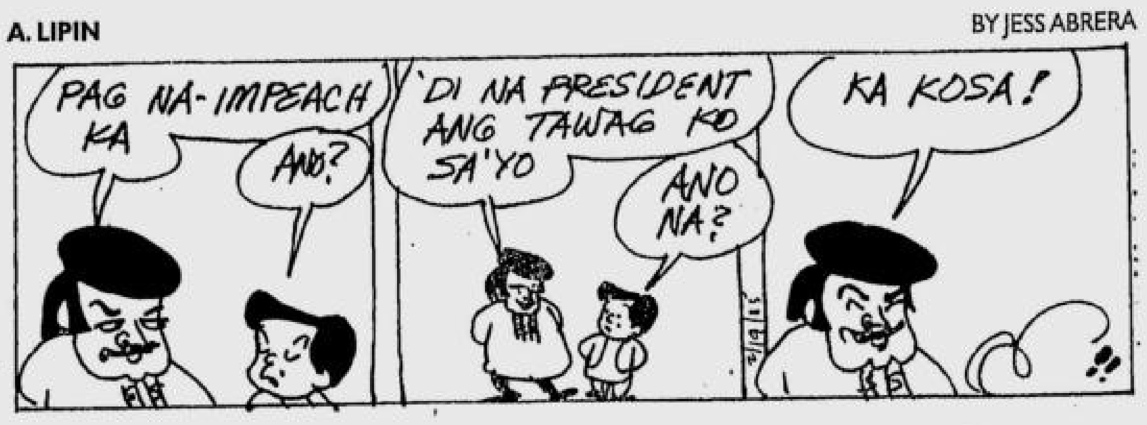
2/18/05

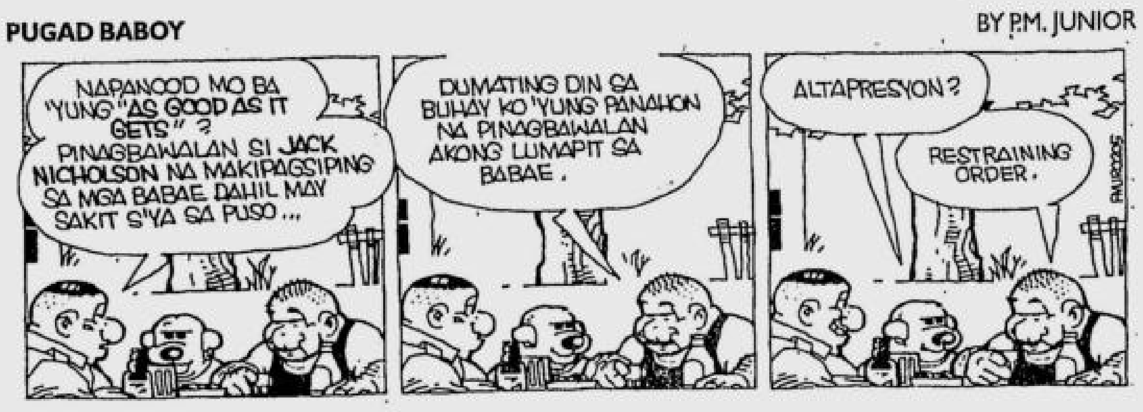
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


PAG NA-IMPEACH KA
ANO?
'DI NA PRESIDENT ANG TAWAG KO SA'YO
ANO NA?
KA KOSA!

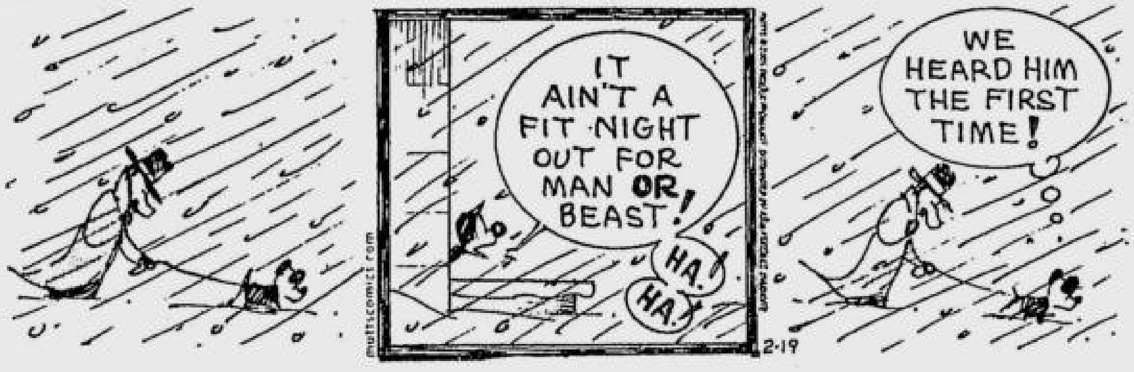
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NAPANOOD MO BA "YUNG" "AS GOOD AS IT GETS"?
PINAGBAWALAN SI JACK NICHOLSON NA MAKIPAGSIPING SA MGA BABAE DAHIL MAY SAKIT S'YA SA PUSO...
DUMATING DIN SA BUHAY KO 'YUNG PANAHON NA PINAGBAWALAN AKONG LUMAPIT SA BABAE.
ALTAPRESYON?
RESTRAINING ORDER.

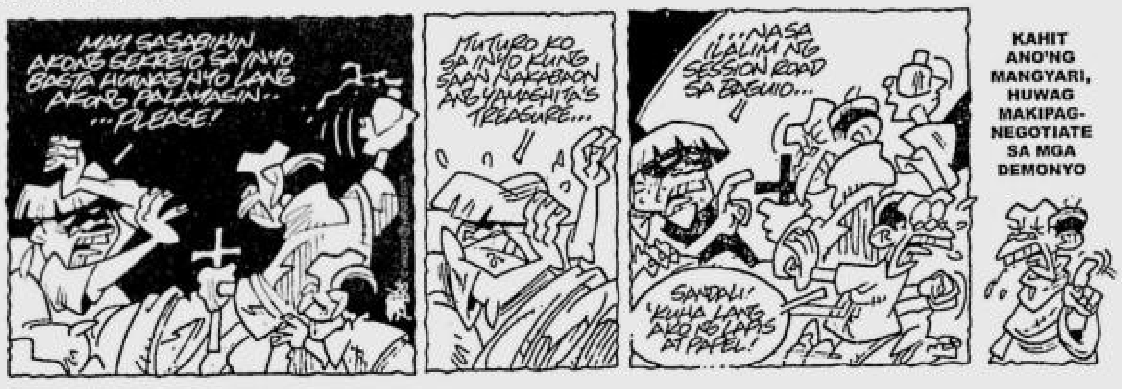
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


IT AIN'T A FIT NIGHT OUT FOR MAN OR, BEAST!
HA. HA.
WE HEARD HIM THE FIRST TIME!
mutts.comics.com
2-19

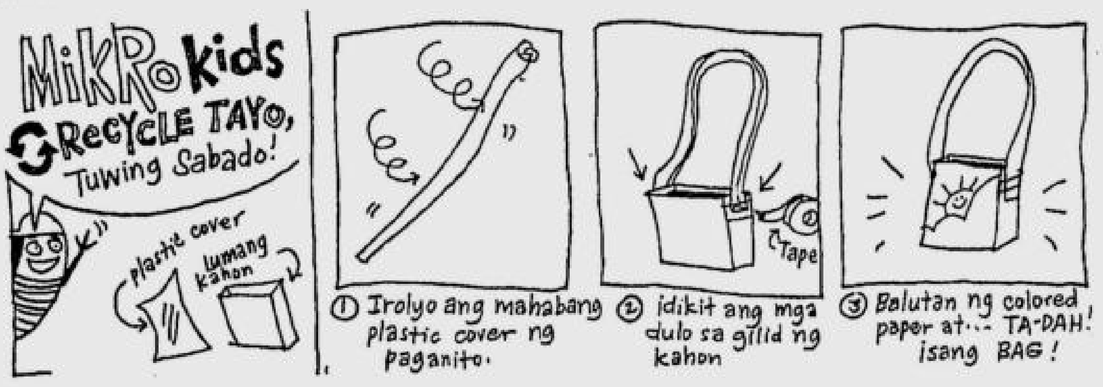
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


MAY SASABIHIN AKONG SEKRETO SA INYO BASTA HUWAG N'YO LANG AKONG PALAYASIN... ...PLEASE!
ITUTURO KO SA INYO KUNG SAAN NAKABAON ANG YAMASHITA'S TREASURE...
...NASA ILALIM NG SESSION ROAD SA BAGUIO...
SANDALI! 'KUHA LANG AKO NG LAPIS AT PAPEL!
KAHIT ANO'NG MANGYARI, HUWAG MAKIPAG-NEGOTIATE SA MGA DEMONYO

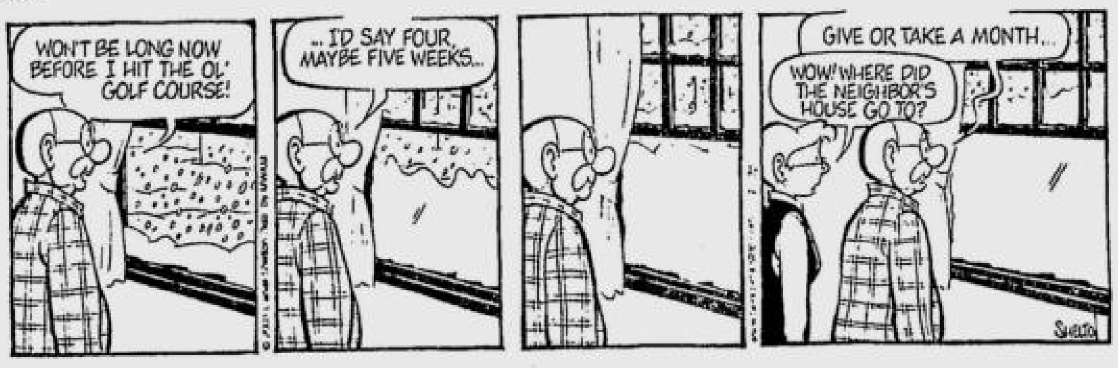
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


MiKRo Kids
RECYCLE TAYO, Tuwing Sabado!
plastic cover
lumang kahon
Tape
① Irolyo ang mahabang plastic cover ng paganito.
② idikit ang mga dulo sa gilid ng kahon
③ Balutan ng colored paper at... TA-DAH! isang BAG!

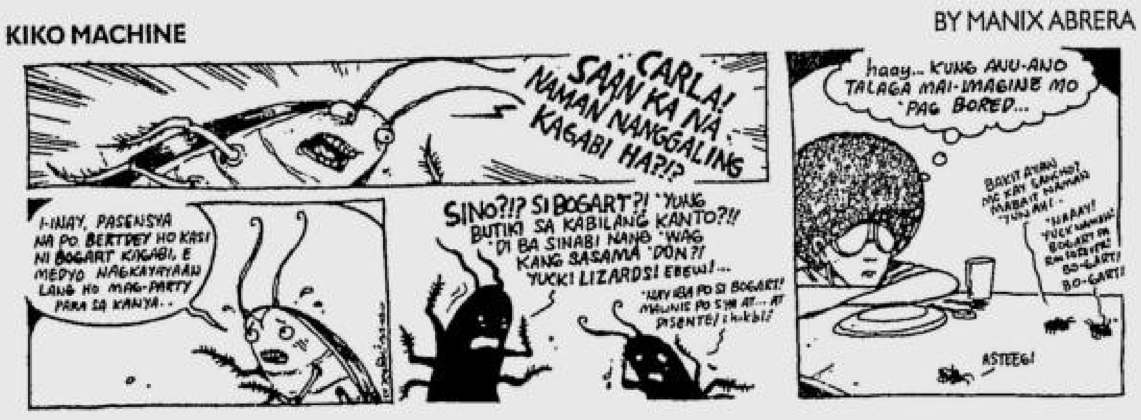
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


WON'T BE LONG NOW BEFORE I HIT THE OL' GOLF COURSE!
...I'D SAY FOUR, MAYBE FIVE WEEKS...
GIVE OR TAKE A MONTH...
WOW! WHERE DID THE NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE GO TO?
SHELTON

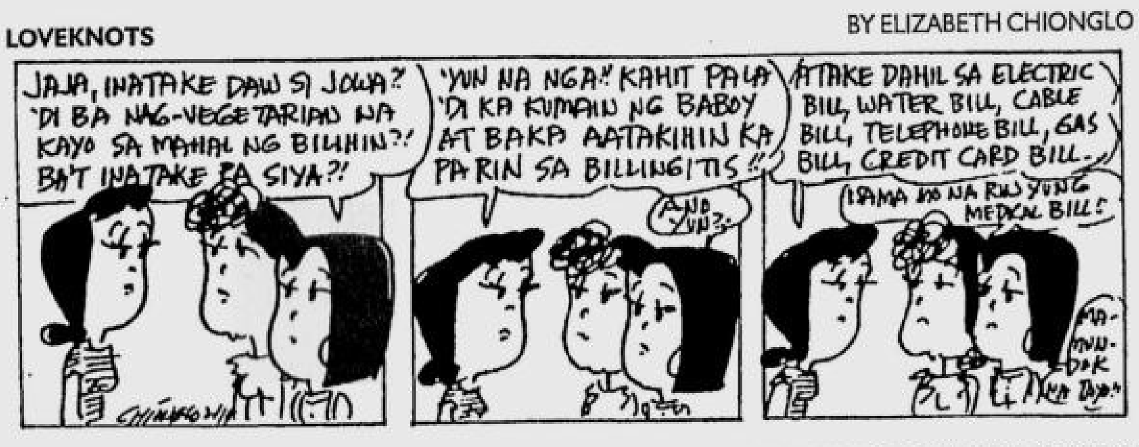
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


CARLA! SAAN KA NA NAMAN NANGGALING KAGABI HA?!?
I-INAY, PASENSYA NA PO BERTDEY HO KASI NI BOGART KAGABI, E MEDYO NAGKAYAYAAN LANG HO MAG-PARTY PARA SA KANYA..
SINO?!? SI BOGART?! 'YUNG BUTIKI SA KABILANG KANTO?!! 'DI BA SINABI NANG 'WAG KANG SASAMA 'DON?! YUCK! LIZARDS! EEEW!...
haay... KUNG ANU-ANO TALAGA MAI-IMAGINE MO 'PAG BORED...
BO-GART! BO-GART!
ASTEEG!

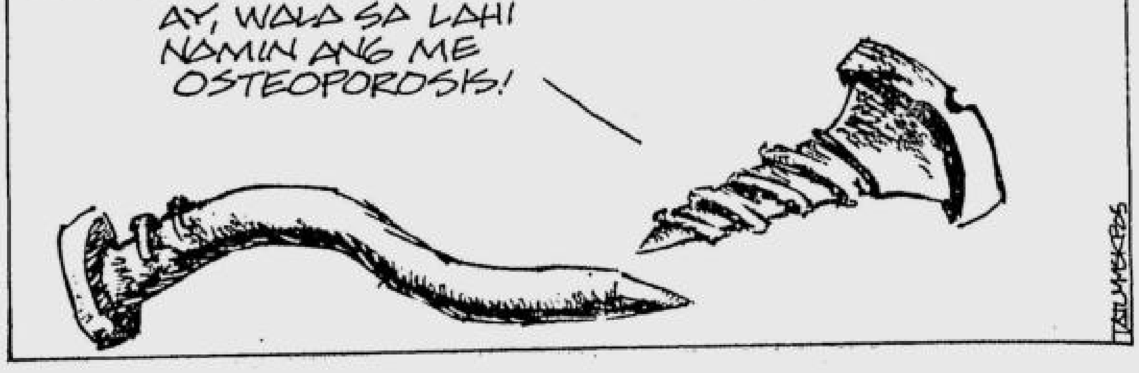
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JAJA, INATAKE DAW SI JOWA? 'DI BA NAG-VEGETARIAN NA KAYO SA MAHAL NG BILIHIN?! BA'T INATAKE PA SIYA?!
'YUN NA NGA! KAHIT PALA 'DI KA KUMAIN NG BABOY AT BAKA AATAKIHIN KA PA RIN SA BILLINGITIS!!
ANO YUN?
ATAKE DAHIL SA ELECTRIC BILL, WATER BILL, CABLE BILL, TELEPHONE BILL, GAS BILL, CREDIT CARD BILL...
ISAMA MO NA RIN YUNG MEDICAL BILL!
MA-NUN-DOK KA DYA!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


AY, WALA SA LAHI NAMIN ANG ME OSTEOPOROSIS!
TATUMHERERAS

You had me at 'Hell, no!'

From page F1

blazing curtain of stars overhead and realized the vast potential of a virgin universe waiting to be exploited, we've been hungering for what we don't, or can't, have—often with dire consequences.

That one fruit

If Adam and Eve had just been satisfied with their buffet of everything-except-this-one-fruit, "global warming" might have meant bikini-clad Scandinavian models on a perennial world tour of goodwill. (This biblical gem goes a long way in disproving Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, as a monkey would have listened to God).

We misconstrue the notions of achievement, challenge, conquest and possession. We confuse curiosity for greed. We desire that 40 GB iPod, or that jacket from Mango, or that girl who refuses to be seduced by our charms. And not for utility, love or any practical purpose, mind you.

We are compelled because it is in our nature to be compelled. We are creatures of mastery, both man and woman, and we do not sleep well at night unless we are satisfied that we have exhausted all resources and means in the response of a challenge.

Logic has little to do with any of this, because a more primal motor drives us, one that is not native to either cranial hemisphere. The world's wealthiest businessmen do not need another million dollars, but they'll close the deal anyway because it's in their blood. It does not appeal to common sense to surf thirty-foot waves in hurricane weather but giant-riders will do so in allegiance to a higher reasoning than reason.

Sour grapes

This is true of courtship as well. Both men and women alike are intrigued by what they can't have, are absorbed by the challenge of forbidden fruit or grapes on a high vine. We climb mountains, simply because they are there.

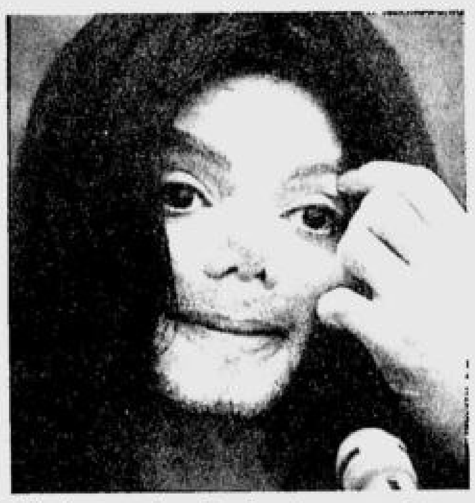
The dangers of scaling a fantasy are, 1) that we have misappropriated our emotion toward the concept of a challenge and not an actual person, and 2) that the reality is often a disenchanting tangle of bad breath and amazingly lame taste in pop music that we're stuck with until the next castle in the sky catches our fancy.

In your case, it certainly seems that you are titillated (what a word) by the challenge of the unattainable. You have to ask yourself in all honesty, are you interested in this girl, or infatuated by the idea of conquest? Because if it's the latter, then you're better off just conserving your energies for someone you're really interested in. Respect her decision and back off.

There is a very fine line between the sweet persistence of a rejected amour and the criminal nature of a stalker. Treat people as equals and not objectives, as peers and not accomplishments. And never, ever, under any circumstance, equate a potential romantic encounter as a conquest—unless the related military metaphors of "bloody revolt" and "the reign of the Terror" appeal to you as well. Besides, have you ever had a conquest kick you in the nuts?

(E-mail author at bohemiansamurai@yahoo.com)

Oh caption, my caption!



Winning caption: ***Da phantom na nagpa-opera***

Sender: Louie Sabater

By Gino de la Paz and Tals Diaz

YI-HEEE! Unfortunately, we may never see the faces of Michael Jackson's offspring—Prince Michael I, Paris, and Prince Michael II. But we'll always have their daddy's makeover-ready mug to brighten our day or scare the living crap out of us. And as your entries proved, it's the latter. From "Planet of the Ape" references (yes, Jacko does look like Helena Bonham-Carter's simian character, right?) to random cracks about plastic surgery, you really had a blast making fun of the "Man in the Mirror." One reader, Errol Zshornack, in fact, wrote in to quote her 7-year-old son (probably our youngest ever captioneer—Yay!) who had this to say about the troubled King of Pop: "Look Ma, the monkey looks like a man!" Great job, kid! But top honors go to Louie Sabater and his Taglish opus. Dial 897-8808 and ask to be connected to our Marketing Department for your "Thriller" of a prize.

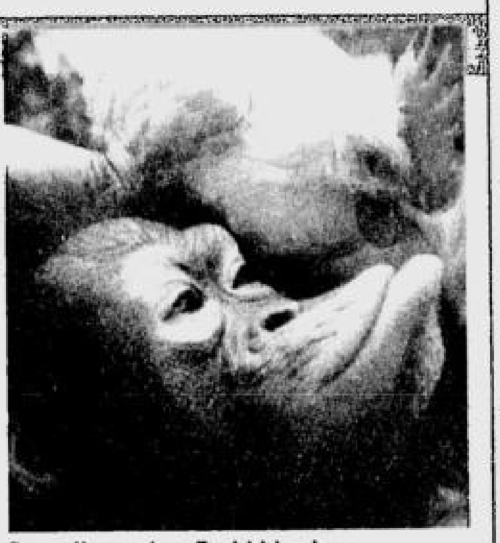
Here's the rest of last week's greatest *hirits*:

MANKEY: Creature from Neverland
Sender: Sem H. Cordial
Caption: Peter Pan-nget
Sender: Orville Ocampo

This Week's Challenge

Kung Hei Fat Choy! Kung Fu Hustle! Belated Happy Ash Wednesday! Blabbity blah blah. Okay enough.

Listen up, y'all. Since it is the post-Valentine's season our big big (black) hearts have decided to give you loyal caption contestants a big treat: AN OVERNIGHT STAY AT HOLIDAY INN, CLARK, PAMPANGA FOR TWO. And as if the uppercase letters weren't obvious enough, we'll say it again. WE'RE GIVING A BIG PRIZE THIS WEEK. Clear? So if you wanna go on a weekend getaway with your loved one for some post V-day "action" (wink wink), gaze at this week's challenge. Captured by our zoo paparazzi Joan Bondoc, here we find Pacquiao the orangutan swapping some romantic spit with Sasakyan Kita the rooster. We kid you not. These are their real names and you can find them canoodling at the Malabon Zoo! So get crackin' on those wisecracks and send those captions to super@inquirer.com.ph or send inquirer sup name/city/caption to 2207 for Globe or 283 for Smart. Kiss kiss, *palanggas*!



Super!'s caption: Forbidden love

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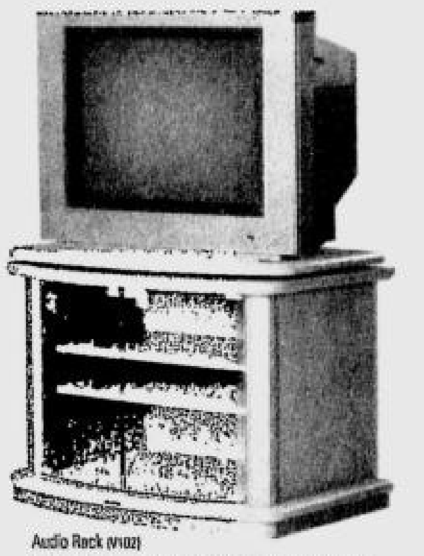
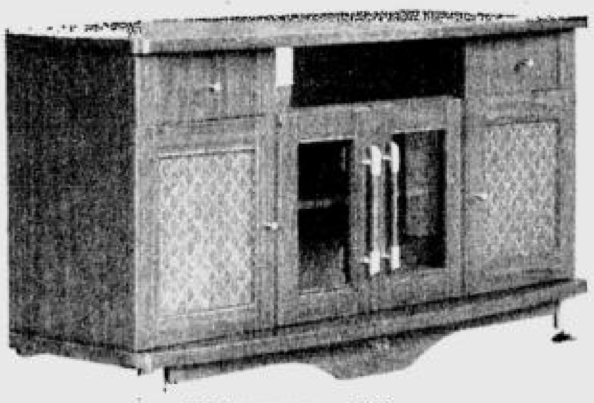
furniture

Orion entertainment center (1614) SAVE 1,000 NOW 7,995 Before 8,995

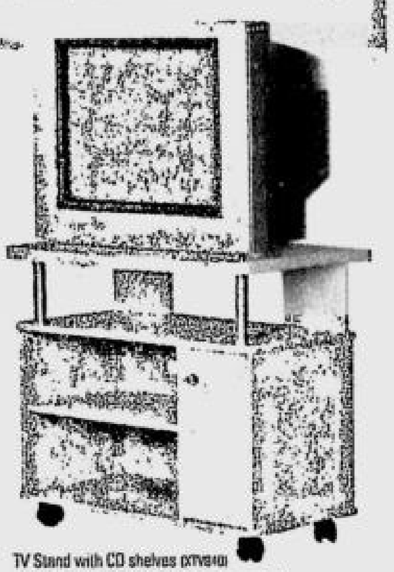


Audio Rack (V102) SAVE 400 NOW 3,395 Before 3,795

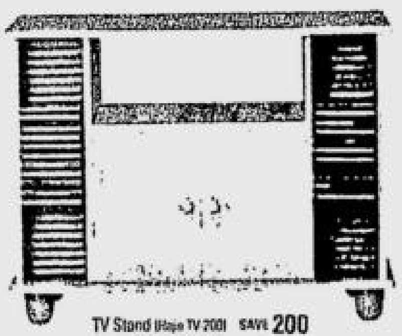
BIG SAVINGS on entertainmentcabinets*
now thru february 28



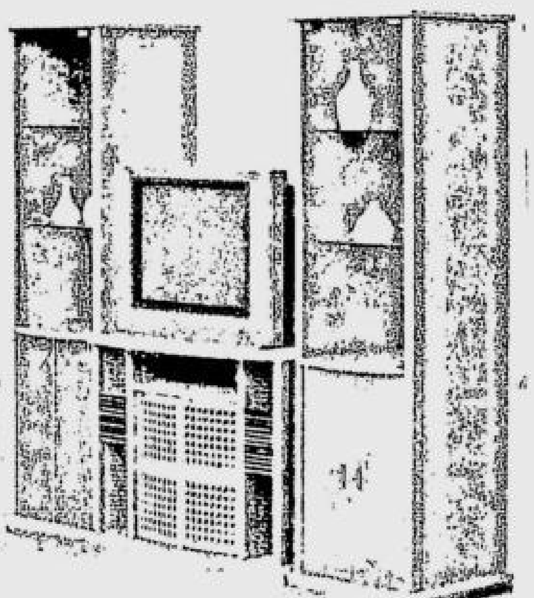
TV Cabinet (LH-4248) SAVE 700 NOW 5,595 Before 6,295



TV Stand with CD shelves (XTV840) SAVE 500 NOW 3,495 Before 3,995



TV Stand (Hapa TV 200) SAVE 200 NOW 1,595 Before 1,795



3-pc Entertainment module (C007-1000) SAVE 1,300 NOW 11,450 Before 12,750

* TVs, CDs and other props not included

SM HOMEWORLD

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Per DTI NCR Permit No. 0382 Series of 2005

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NUSA DUA
The Gift of the Earth
A quality project of FILINVEST LAND, INC.
FILINVEST
INVEST ON SOLID GROUND

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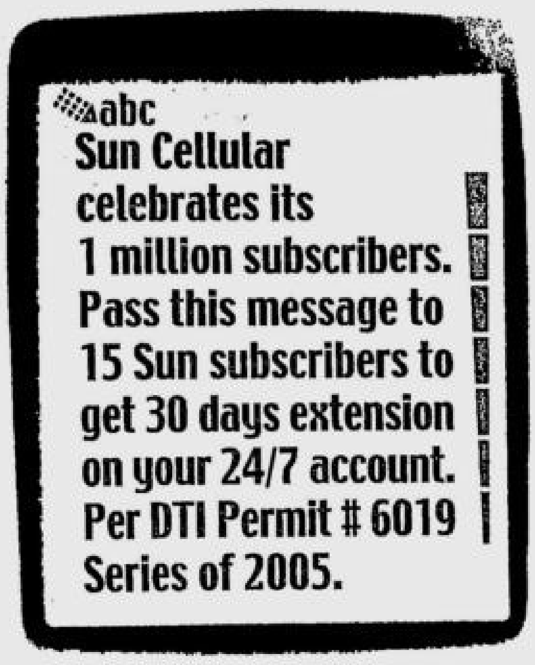
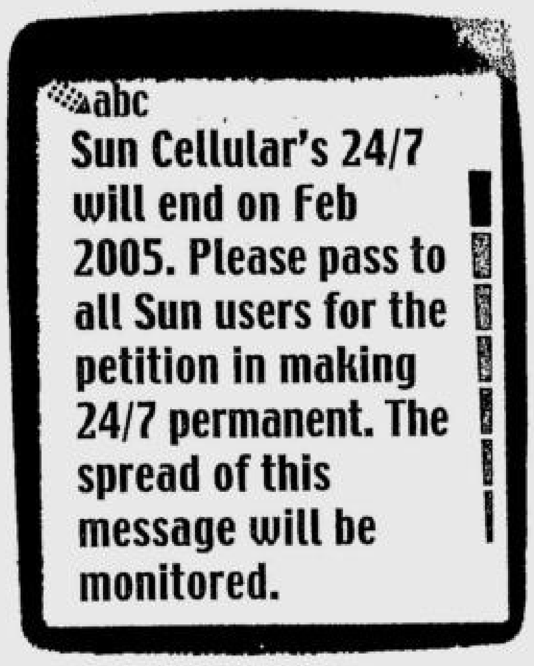
For more information, please call
(632) 809-2954
www.nusaduafarm.com

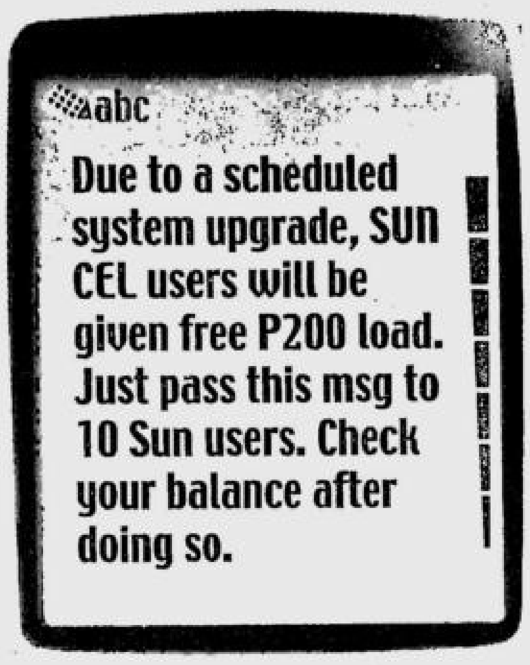
Don't be fooled by false texts.



abc
Sun Cellular celebrates its 1 million subscribers. Pass this message to 15 Sun subscribers to get 30 days extension on your 24/7 account. Per DTI Permit # 6019 Series of 2005.



abc
Sun Cellular's 24/7 will end on Feb 2005. Please pass to all Sun users for the petition in making 24/7 permanent. The spread of this message will be monitored.



abc
Due to a scheduled system upgrade, SUN CEL users will be given free P200 load. Just pass this msg to 10 Sun users. Check your balance after doing so.

Sun Cellular sets things straight.

There are text messages using the Sun Cellular name claiming 24/7 Call & Text Unlimited will end soon. There are also false promotional messages circulating that promise rewards for passing them on. These are untrue.

These unauthorized text messages are instigated by certain parties who put their personal and business interests above the consumer's welfare. These fabricated messages have no use but to confuse our Sun Cellular subscribers, raise false expectations and more importantly, congest our network.

Clearly, these said parties do not want the 24/7 Call & Text Unlimited service to succeed.

We advise you to please ignore these messages as they are meant to mislead you.

We therefore reiterate that Sun Cellular does not do pass-on text promotions.

For valid Sun Cellular promotions, please call 200 using your Sun Cellular phone or visit our website at www.suncellular.com.ph.

We remain committed in providing you with the best value service you deserve, in the spirit of fair and healthy competition.

Thank you for your continued patronage.

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E-mail: super@inquirer.com.ph
Text us your feedback: inquirer sup name/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Super

style . urban living . pop culture . entertainment . recreation

Super!'s Guide to Two Mushy Films

By Pepe Diokno
and James Gabrillo

V-DAY'S up, ladies and gentlemen—the mushy-ness is over. Unfortunately, our top networks' Valentine releases are still making their rounds of local cinemas. God help us all.

Now assuming you have not seen either "Let the Love Begin" or "Dreamboy," bless you. But if you must, go have yourself anointed and bring with you a copy of Super!'s Guide to Two Mushy Films.

These two films have been pitted against each other over and over again. But we aren't going to do that. Pitting Piolo against Richard and Angel against Bea—Piolo might enjoy himself. Instead, we're just going to put it all on the table—you decide, peeps.

However, we reserve the right to hand out awards.

Dreamboy

Stars Piolo Pascual and Bea Alonzo

Watch it because...

- It's different
- The screenwriter's someone new
- You'll see MTV VJ Hunt reject Chase Tinio finally doing what he wants
- It has the best ending credits in the world (well, maybe)
- ... of Mico Palanca's mole
- ... of Jackie Castillejo (is she the mother of Dyan Castillejo?)
- ... of Julia Clarete
- ... of AJ Dee
- ... of the cute dolphins in Subic
- Piolo plays three "different characters"—a rich guy, a poor guy, and one who's right in the middle. (No pun intended)

Don't watch it because...

- There is 0 chemistry
- ... of the stupid shampoo plugs
- 10 minutes into the film, you get it already
- ... of Camille Prats' braces
- ... of Camille Prats' arms
- ... of Camille Prats' makeup
- There's a song and dance number at the top of the film (freaky)
- ... of the Piolo-Bea Wet T-shirt Contest (wait...)
- Nova Villa plays the exact same character she did in last year's "So Happy Together"
- ... of Bea Alonzo—stop saying she can act, everybody

"LET THE Love Begin" stretches logic but keeps the *kilig* factor alive.

Ratings:

Pepe: ¾
James: ¾

Let the Love Begin

Stars Richard Gutierrez and Angel Locsin, and Mark Herras and Jennylyn Mercado (why these two are given top billing, we do not know)

Watch it because...

- What it lacks in sense it makes up for in chemistry
- ... of Tuesday Vargas as Wednesday Vargas (ooh...)
- ... of Geoff Rodriguez (MTV VJ Hunt reject, soon to be AXN Challenge reject)
- Richard gets a scholarship at UCLA (only in the movies...)
- Angel Locsin has a swimming pool scene
- It's a GMA Films comeback
- Hey, I've never seen Richard and Angel together before!
- Hey, I've never seen Mark and Jennylyn together before!
- It does have the *kilig* factor

These Valentine releases are still making the rounds of local cinemas . . . God help us all

Don't watch it because...

- Richard Gutierrez is supposed to be a janitor
- Angel Locsin is supposed to be a businesswoman
- ... of Mark and Jennylyn (*Yayo* and *Yaya* of the Year!)
- ... of Paolo Contis
- There is no song and dance number. There is no song and dance number!
- The ending is exactly like the endings of all the other *kilig* lovey-dovey movies. (A girl. A guy. A field. Fade out)

Ratings:

Pepe: ¾ (because it did fulfill its Valentine's movie purpose)
James: 2/4

Awards!

Best Actor: AJ Dee (because we don't know you but people were shouting your name)

Best Child Actress: Bea Alonzo

Best Senior Citizen in a Forty-something Woman Role: Jackie Castillejo

Best in Swimsuit: Angel Locsin

Best Use of the Days of the Week: Tuesday Vargas

Best Line: *"Pag ang lalake nakatulala, nakatulala lang talaga!"*

Best Robin Padilla Impersonation: Piolo Pascual (you should see it—he acts, looks and sounds exactly like Robin Padilla)

Best Male Impersonation: Piolo Pascual (almost believable, we must say)

Best Supporting Cast in an Ensemble: "Let the Love Begin"

Best Useless Characters: Mark and Jennylyn

Best Ears: Paolo Contis (well, at least we gave you something)

Happy 15th Birthday Award: Camille Prats (we can still see the baby fat)

Most Convincing: Richard Gutierrez (you made us believe you were a bird, now you make us believe you're a janitor)

Best Story: "Dreamboy"

Best Direction: Mac Alejandre

Longest Name Award (just to balance the awards out): "Let the Love Begin"

"DREAMBOY" seemed more like a two-hour shampoo commercial. (From left) Bea Alonzo's hair, Bea Alonzo and Piolo Pascual

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CHRISTIAN BAUTISTA
IN HIS FIRST MAJOR SOLO CONCERT
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Colour Everywhere
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With every purchase of a dozen Dunkin' Donuts, pick a stub to win any of the following prizes:

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○ A "Colour Everywhere" CD featuring songs from Christian Bautista
○ 1 piece Rainbow Choco Rings
○ 4 pieces Munchkins
○ 1 poster of Christian Bautista

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• See posters for details.

with:
Rachelle Ann Go
17:28
Playshop Kids

and our very special guest:
Gary Valenciano

directed by: Audie Gemora

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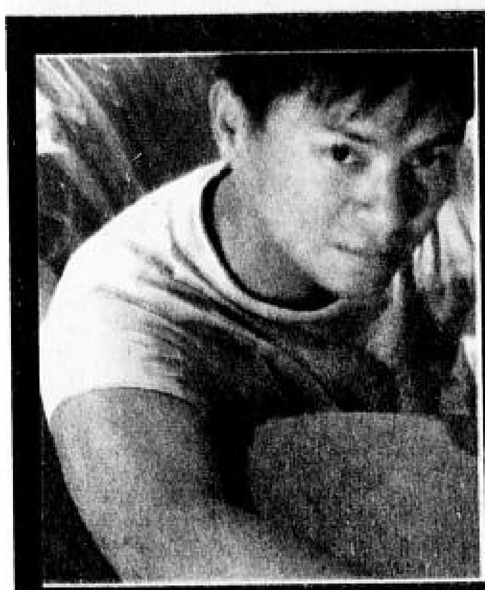
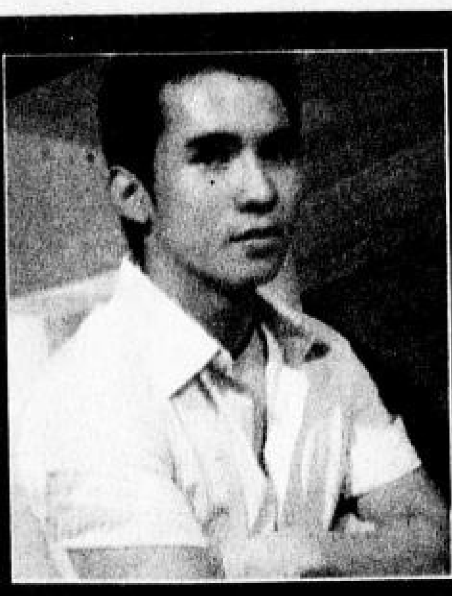


DJ Jon Naval

Style... house, from tribal to funky
E-mail... xpressjon@yahoo.com
Residency... I spin in Teak (Rockwell) and Azzurro. Used to do Olive.
Day occupation... entrepreneur
Main influences... Paul Van Dyk, Érick Morillo, Scumfrog and Tom Stephan.
Mentor... I've learned a lot from Mano [Dario] and Jed Dario.
Best gig ever... "Big Love" at the NBC Tent last year
All-time best track... Paul Van Dyk's "Forbidden Fruit"
Top 5 tracks now... "The Power of Bangra" by Snap vs. Motivo; "What You Waiting For" (JLC Mix) by Gwen Stefani; "Desert Bound" by Scumfrog; "Avalon" by Juliet; "Tribal Patrol" by Geoff Gaines
Guilty Pleasure... Sarah McLachlan
Skeleton in the Closet, song you used to play... Every DJ used to have Moony's "Flying Away" but now, I can't stand listening to it.
Worst request ever... Someone asked to play Atomic Kitten
International DJ you'd want to open for... Erick Morillo and Scumfrog
Song/s you'd want to remix... Sarah McLachlan's "Train Wreck" would sound awesome in a house remix. I'd also like to work on something by Depeche Mode
Dream venue... Space in Ibiza
Music Mecca... Ibiza and New York
First CD ever purchased... I think it was Guns and Roses.
Vision for the local club scene... I would like to see more people supporting the events and the local DJs.
Advice to new DJs... Love the music. Read the crowd. Know your genre. Be original.
The coolest party person who goes to my gigs is... my girlfriend.
The Manila club scene is... small but tight.
Music is... the answer.

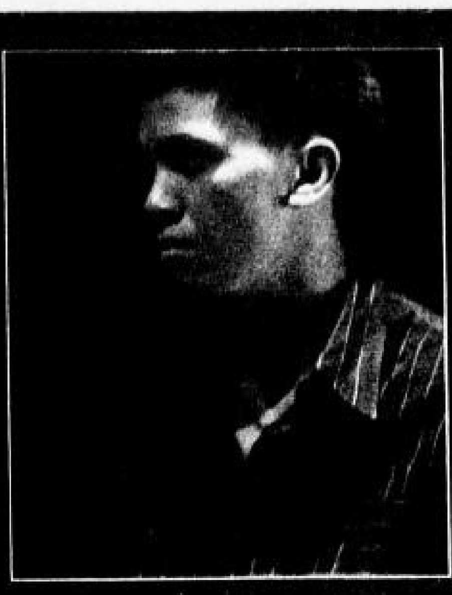
DJ Bam del Valle

Style... progressive/tribal house
E-mail... bamdelvalle@gmail.com
Residency... Government along Makati Ave. in Makati
Events... the very first "Pink Saturday"; "Revolution," Government's opening party, and the upcoming "National Anthems Vol. 2" on Feb. 25.
Main influences... Everything But The Girl, New Order, Peter Rauhofer, Giangi Cappai
Best gig ever... New Year's Eve 2004 at Government, the party lasted until 8 a.m.
Top 5 tracks now... "I Like It" (Star 69 Promo) by Decibel featuring La Veetra; "All This Time" (Ultra) by Jonathan Peters featuring Sylver Logan Sharp; "Circuito" (Mantra Vibes Promo) by Alma Matris; "If You Love Me" (Yoshitoshi) by Morel; "Kerosene" (Sheeva Records) by FC Nond Project
International DJ you'd want to open for... Peter Rauhofer
Local DJ you admire... Kevin Ruiz
Vision for the local club scene... One day soon I'd like to see the Manila club scene really ignite big-time—with more new clubs playing a variety of genres, more fresh talent willing to experiment and share music, and more people exploring club music beyond just Moony and Chicane.
Advice to new DJs... Support the dance music industry by actually buying music. Illegally downloading commercially-available tracks will one day kill the very industry you are hoping to get into.
The best thing about spinning in a club is... seeing the dance floor go wild over an anthem you created. That and the free drinks.
The Manila club scene... is alive again. It's about time.
Music is... the food of love. Play on!



DJ Martin Aquino

Style... groovin', deep, funky house
E-mail... marty2@hotmail.com
Residency... I do regular guestings at Peligro, Mati Bar and Restaurant, and Coquina.
Events... "Fashion with a Cause" at Dish, "M Night" Visa Mastercard Promo at Bamboo Park,Greenbelt, "Sunrise" at Mati Bar and Restaurant, Rockwell, and my upcoming Nocturnal produced event at The Enterprise tentatively set for Mar. 18
Main influences... I take inspiration from foreign and local DJs. I learned to spin by myself through watching my friend Ken-dog play.
All-time best track... "The Future of the Future (Deep Dish Mix)" by Everything But The Girl
Top 5 tracks now... "Drive On" by Soldiers of Twilight; "Like Jazz" by Halo & Jay-J; "Never Give Up" by Nu Spiritual; "This is Jazz" by No Assemble Required; "Nitelife" by Numatik Soul
International DJ you'd want to open for... Deep Dish and Steve Lawler
Local DJ you admire... Kevin Ruiz, because his set has so much power.
Song/s you'd want to remix... "Kissing" by Bliss and "Perfect" by True Faith
Pre-gig rituals... I just pray to God and ask for guidance.
Vision for the local club scene... I'm hoping that our fellow Filipinos will support the local club scene. I also want them to appreciate the real music, not because it's popular or always being played.
Spinning in front of a crowd is like... being a God for a moment.
I think people who send lame email requests that ask for you add them to your Friendster... are desperate.
Drugs are not my thing but... my girlfriend and God are.
Music is... my drug.



DJ Martin Pulgar

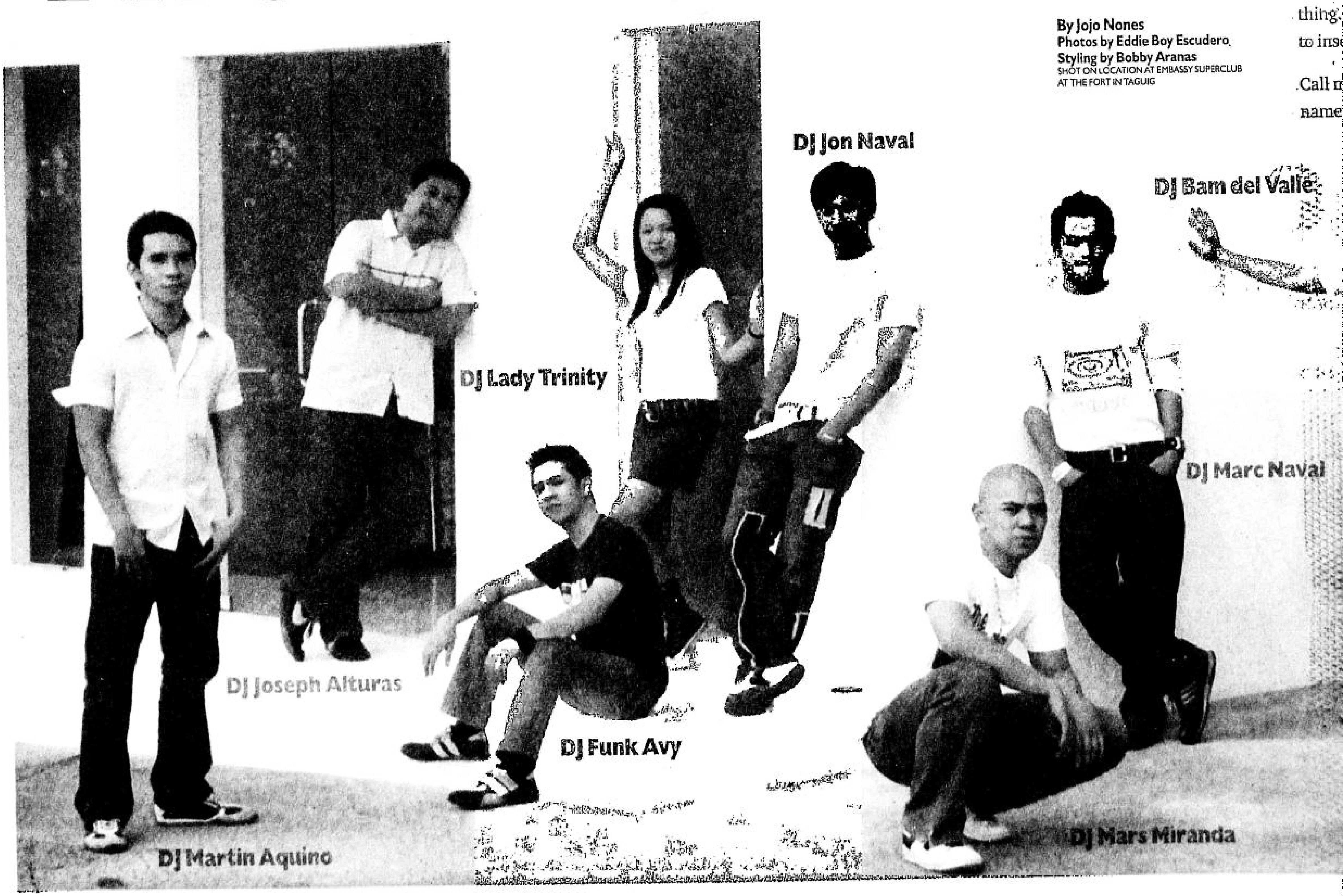
Style... house, tribal
Age... Is that a trick question?
E-mail... djmartin9ph@yahoo.com
Residency... Embassy at The Fort in Taguig, Temple in Greenbelt 2, Makati
First spun in... 1995, I was so nervous my knees were shaking.
Main influences... Pete Tong, Tall Paul, DJ Tiesto
Mentor/s... Mon Maramba and Reggie Inocencio-these guys helped me a lot during my early years.
Best gig ever... a foam party at The Basement in Eastwood. Great vibe! Plus a lot of wet and wild chicks!
Top 5 tracks now... "F*ck You" by Yer Man; "Free" (Remixes 2005) by Ultra Naté; "House Music by Cuba2"; "Strings of Life" by Silicone Soul"; "Time of our Lives" by Paul van Dyk
All-time worst track... "Happy" by Square Heads
International DJ you'd want to open for... Jazzy M
Local DJ you admire... Elmer Dado of North Bar in Bacolod City
Song/s you'd want to remix... "Noypi" by Bamboo
Pre-gig rituals... I drink a shot of Kamikaze or Jagermeister.
Dream venue... Club Space in Miami
First CD ever purchased... "Off the Wall" by Michael Jackson
Vision for the local club scene... I think 2005 is going to be an interesting year for the club scene. More clubs are being opened so I guess it's going to pick up.
Advice to new DJs... Practice!
The best thing about spinning in a club is... the vibe, it's always the vibe.
The only worse thing than music-illiterate people who go clubbing simply to "be seen" are... people who say they're DJs when they're not.
The coolest party person who goes to my gigs is... my girlfriend! She's my biggest critic.

DJ Lady Trinity

Style... house. I also love tribal and tech.
E-mail... djladytrinity@yahoo.com, djladytrinity@gmail.com
Residency... Future in Mile Long, Amorsolo, Makati
Main influences... my husband, DJ Funk Avy
All-time best track... "Strings of Life" by Silicone Soul
Top 5 tracks now... "Strings of Life"; "Stay Around"; "Call on Me"; "The Weekend"; "Most Prescious Love"
All-time worst track... "Happy" by Square Heads
Worst request ever... Someone asked me to play "Choo Choo Train." I wanted to barf.
International DJ you'd want to open for... Mistress Barbara, Smokin' Jo, or Pete Tong.
Local DJ you admire... DJ Funk Avy, Houseboy, Wendell Garcia and DJ Noel (from the Kemistry family)
Song/s you'd want to remix... "Boogie Tonight" by Tweet and any track from the phenomenal local group Drip
Dream venue... Zouk in Singapore and Ibiza
Vision for the local club scene... I dream of one day when all people will be into house music, when they will go into a club to primarily enjoy the music and its vibe.
Advice to new DJs... Don't be a DJ if you will only play crap! DJs are not jukeboxes. Having some fame is part of it but don't do it just to be popular. If you want to be famous, enter show business! You must have the passion for it. DJs are also musicians. It does not end with mixing tracks, make your own original or remix one.
The coolest party people who go to my gigs are... Robbie Carmona, Tim Yap, and JR Isaac.
The Manila club scene is... getting there.

The new class

By Jojo Nones
Photos by Eddie Boy Escudero
Styling by Bobby Aranas
SHOT ON LOCATION AT EMBASSY SUPERCLUB AT THE FORT IN TAGUIG



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DJ Joseph Alturas

Style… chill house-I play "couchLab" music.
E-mail… jettechilled@yahoo.com
Residency… My group couchLab-Juno Oebanda (events director), Gerard Henson (general surgeon), and myself-is a resident of Tiananmen Restaurant and Bar along Makati Ave. We also jam in Wasabi, also along Makati Ave. in Makati.
Main influences… Chris Coco, Lenny K (Ibizaarre), DJ Jonathan of SaTrincha, Phil Mison, Jose Padilla, Bruno Lepretre, Lol Hammond, Pete Lawrence (The Big Chill)
Best gig ever… couchLab's "Sunset to Sunset" event.
Top 5 tracks now… "Lost in Horizon" by Vannessa Petuccinni; "Blue Wave"; "Autumn Tactics" (GFH 101 Remix); "Relax"; "Another Fine Day"
All-time worst track… "Happy" by Square Heads. Please…
Guilty Pleasure… 24k music such as Exile, 10cc, Fleetwood Mac, Pilot, Kenny Loggins.
Worst request ever… I remember one time when a guest approached me and requested any song from "Edwin and Fire" ("Earth, Wind, and Fire"). I told her we only play downtempo in that club. All of a sudden her companion requested, "Sige na nga, 'How Gee' na lang." Wow.
International DJ you'd want to open for… Lol Hammond or Pete Lawrence (Big Chill records).
Songs you'd want to remix… "Don't Let the Sun Catch You Crying", it's very Balearic, and Apo Hiking Society's "Kumot at Unan".
First CD ever purchased… Housemartins
The scariest things under my bed are… my photos.
The best thing about spinning in a club is… winning new friends.
The coolest party person who goes to my gigs is… my brother, Mike.

DJ Marc Naval

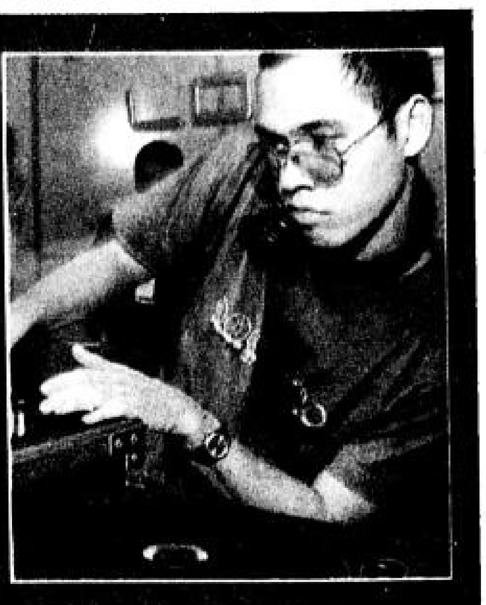
Style… cutting-edge house music (everything from latin house to sexy tribal house)
E-mail… marc_naval@hotmail.com
Residency… I guest in various bars in Makati like V-bar, Teak, Coquina, and Azzuro.
Previous residency… Olive, Pravda, Venezia.
Day occupation… fashion store owner
Main influences… Larry Levan, Danny Tenaglia, Rodger Sanchez, Miguel Migs, Tom Stephan, and the sound of Tears for Fears.
Mentor… My brother Jon introduced me to the whole house music scene but I simply learned how to spin by watching DJs and by practicing in my house.
All-time best track… "Love Yourself" by Blue Six
Top 5 tracks now… "Traccia" by Planet Funk; "In The Beginning" (Mark Knight and MTV Mix) by Hool Vs. Brucheimer; "Now is the Time" by DJ Frank Garcia vs. Sergio Serrano; "Don't Lose The Magic" (DJ Gregory Mix) by Shawn Christopher; "Rainwater" (Solu Music Mix) by Astrid Suryanto
Worst request ever… Someone asked me for Madonna's "Like a Virgin." Sorry, just not my thing.
International DJ you'd want to open for… Erick Morillo or Rodger Sanchez, the biggest house DJs today!
Local DJ you admire… Mano [Dario] the late TC because they constantly push house music here in our country. I admire their passion for music.
Song/s you'd want to remix… Tracks by Alicia Keys because I really love her voice and I think it would really sound good with a cool house rhythm.
Advice to new DJs… Read the crowd.
Spinning in front of a crowd is like… being a rock star.
The scariest things under my bed are… my dirrrty boxers.
Music is… my weapon.

DJ Mars Miranda

Style… a mix of R&B and hip-hop with soul, funk, and disco
E-mail… mars_miranda@abs-cbn.com
Residency… Embassy, V Bar
Previous residency… Temple, Industry
Events… Studio 23's "Sun Lounge 2005"; "AND 1 Mix Tape Tour Manila"; Niké Freestyle Event
Main influences… DJ Apollo Threat and DJ Shorkut of The Beat Junkies
Best gig ever… one Thursday night at Orange
Strangest gig ever… an Indian Halloween party
All-time best track… "Billie Jean" by Michael Jackson
Top 5 tracks now… "That Fire" by Bosko; "Disco Inferno" by 50 Cent; "Rich Girl" by Gwen Stefani and Eve; "I Changed My Mind" by Keysha Cole; "Tonight You're Mine" by 7 Shots
Worst popular tracks now… "Milkshake" by Kelis
Guilty Pleasure… "Under The Sea" from The Little Mermaid
International DJ you'd want to open for… Afrika Bambaataa
Local DJ you admire… DJ Kimosave
Songs you'd want to remix… "Let's Get It On" by Marvin Gaye and "Mr DJ" by Sharon Cuneta
Dream venue… Oprah's birthday party
Music Mecca… New York
First CD ever purchased… "To the Extreme" by Vanilla Ice
Vision for the local club scene… Everybody's dancing, having the time of their lives, without caring about what other people are thinking.
Advice to new DJs… Do it for the music, not the popularity!
The best thing about spinning in a club is… getting paid to go out!
The coolest party person who goes to my gigs is… the old guy with the white "ZZ" top beard. I'd like to meet him someday.

DJ Funk Avy

Style… house-progressive, tribal, and tech
E-mail… funkavy@yahoo.com / funkavy@gmail.com
Residency… Club Halo in Mile Long, Amorsolo, Makati
Day occupation… I spend most of my day in the studio, mixing and making new tracks.
Main influences… Houseboy (Dondon), Jerome Magno, Salamangkero (Noel), Pornstar (Wendell Garcia)
Best gig ever… Out Of The Box, E-Fest
All-time best track… "Darkness Falls"
Top 5 tracks now… "Somebody Told Me" (King Unique Vocal Remix) by The Killer; "The World Is Mine" (Antoine Clamaran Remix) by David Guetta; "El Culto De Africa" (Mario Ochoa Remix) by DJ Fist; "House Music Pneumonia" by Jorge Jaramillo; "Going Insane" (Steve Mac Bongoloid Remix) by Wally Lopez and David Ferrero
All-time worst track… "Happy" by Square Heads
Worst popular tracks now… "Saxo", "Bucci Bag", "Love On The Run"
Worst request ever… "Better Off Alone" by Alice Deejay
International DJ you'd want to open for… Jeff Mills
Songs you'd want to remix… "Yellow" by Coldplay and any track from local group Drip
Music Mecca… Detroit
Vision for the local club scene… Give it three to five more years to grow and it'll certainly be as dominant as the scene in Singapore.
Advice to new DJs…:\ Innovate don't imitate!
Spinning in front of a crowd is like… preaching to disciples.
The best thing about spinning in a club is… doing what you love to and getting paid for it.
The coolest party person who goes to my gigs is… Lev Pe, "the party animal."



DJ Benjo Marquez

(currently in California; photo courtesy of Bigfish Manila)
Style… deep house
E-mail… knowyoursoul@hotmail.com
Events… NBK's Ad Congress event in Baguio and Manomission in Boracay, Big Fish's Hed Kandi and Cream parties, BBC's Therapy
Day occupation… School
First spun in… 1999
Medium of choice… Vinyl
Main influences… Jojo Flores, Masters at Work, Glenn Underground, Chez Damier and all underground DJs that are too many to mention
Mentor… Manolet Dario will always be someone that I will look up to because of his skill, dedication to our scene and genuine love for other people.
Best gig ever… Cream Halloween party for Big Fish.
Strangest gig ever… I once played for street children. It was a heartwarming experience but what was strange was that I am sure that the techno producers would never have imagined that their music would ever be played in that setting. I know I didn't.
Song/s you'd want to remix… "Basta Tayo'y Magkasama"
Pre-gig rituals… I sacrifice burnt offerings. No, I just pray.
Dream venue… Coming soon…
Music Mecca… New York.
First CD ever purchased… Old School Hiphop from the legendary Vanilla Ice
DJ get-up… Spandex and a pink baby t-shirt. Just kidding. A koala bear my size.
Advice to new DJs… Be original. No one else can be you. You owe that to yourself and the world.
Spinning in front of a crowd is like… controlling a storm.
The scariest things under my bed are… monsters!!!
Music is… a gift. Use it wisely.

ila's hip, young DJs are ingénues no more

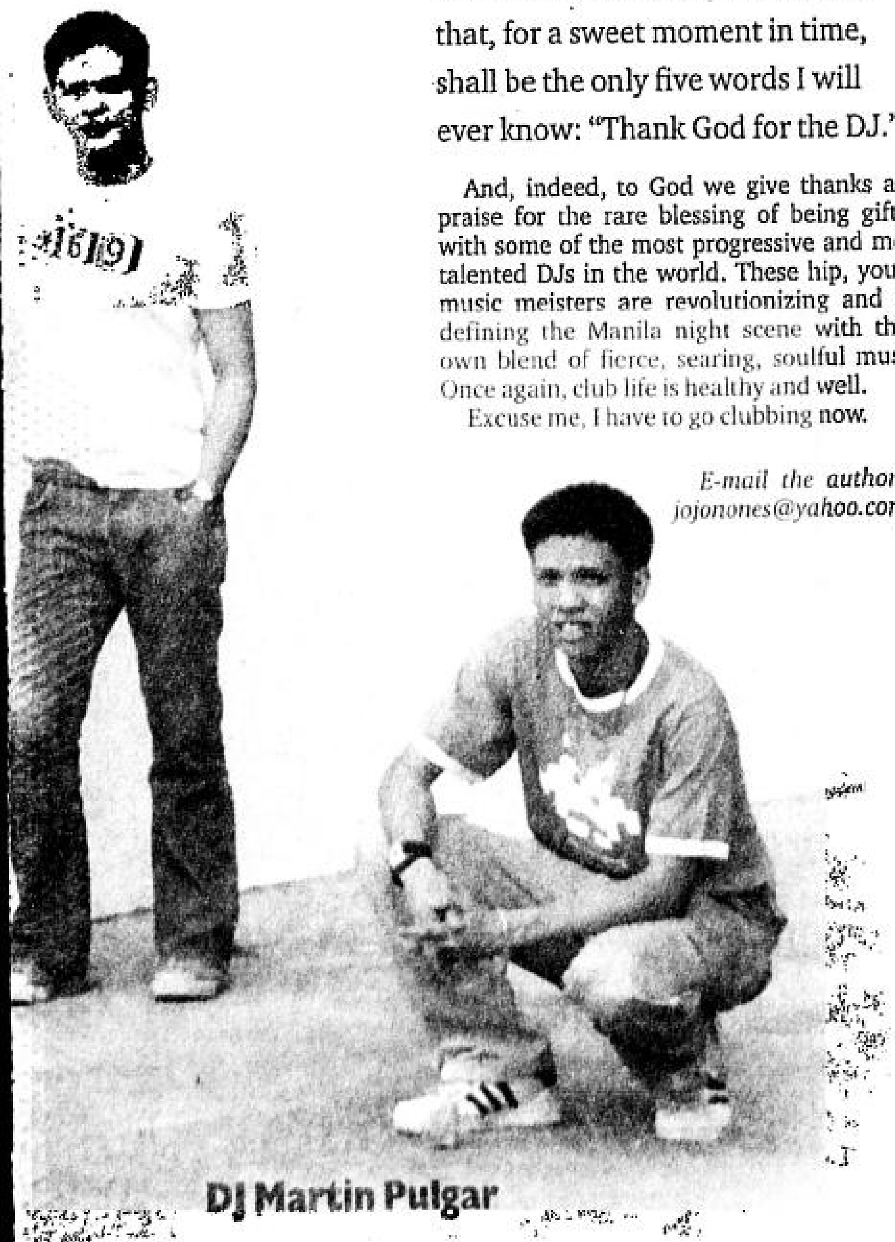
NLY two things I can really do re writing and clubbing—and t even so sure about the first (This is the cue for the editor rt a note. Hehe.)

e shallow and every other vile on the list but, for me, clubbing, like writing, is a passion, a release, a journey into a sea of music, of bodies bent till grotesque, of adrenaline, and energy, and power. And when I'm deep within the otherworldly trance of the pulsating rhythms, some residual hint of consciousness inside brings me to chant five words, only five words that, for a sweet moment in time, shall be the only five words I will ever know: "Thank God for the DJ."

And, indeed, to God we give thanks and praise for the rare blessing of being gifted with some of the most progressive and most talented DJs in the world. These hip, young music meisters are revolutionizing and redefining the Manila night scene with their own blend of fierce, searing, soulful music. Once again, club life is healthy and well.

Excuse me, I have to go clubbing now.

E-mail the author at jojonones@yahoo.com.



DJ Martin Pulgar

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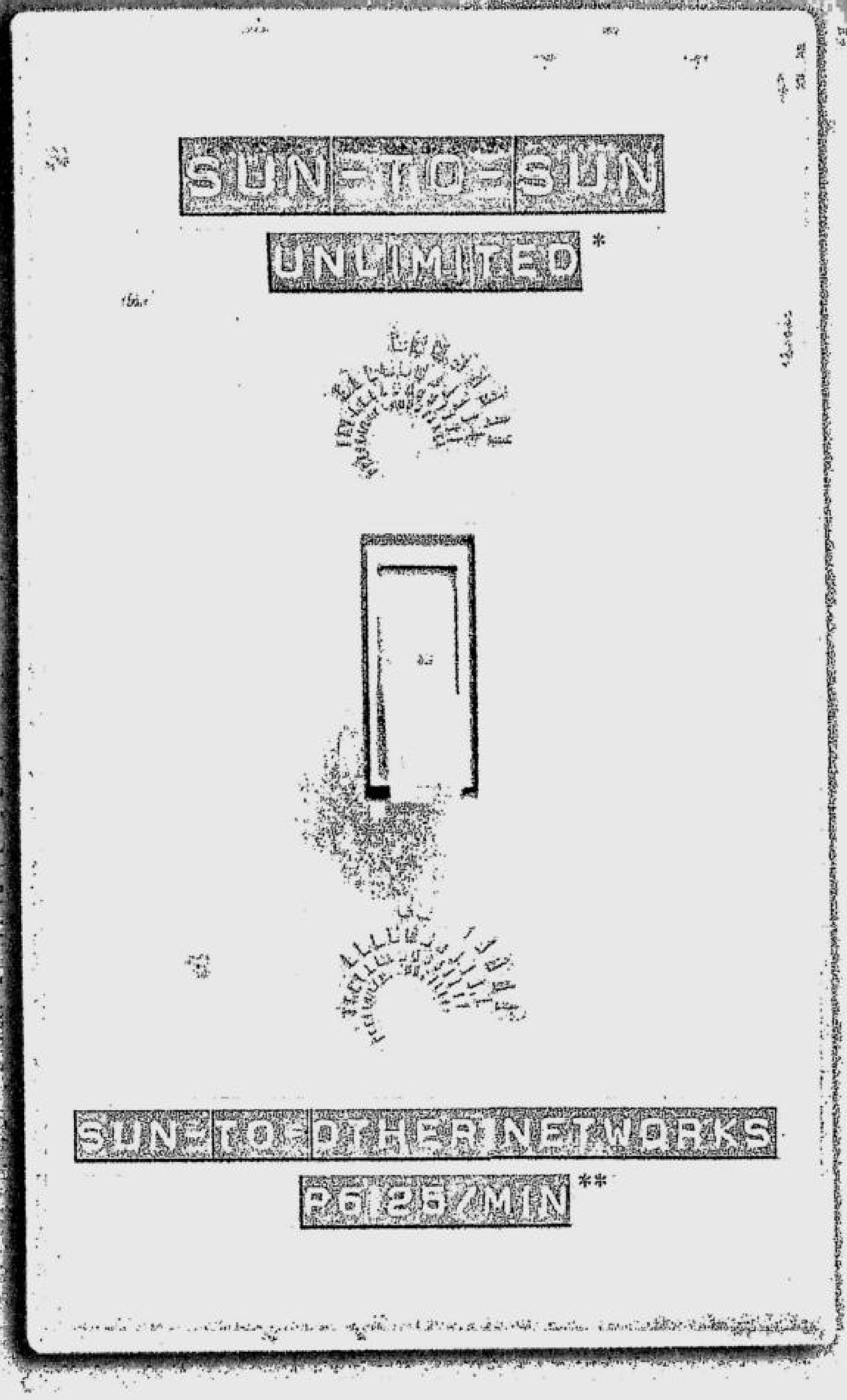
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